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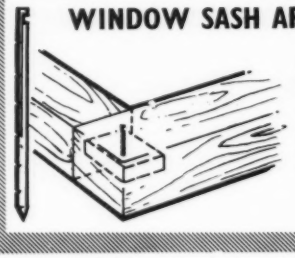

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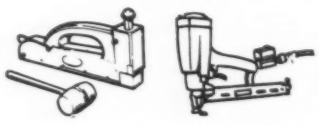

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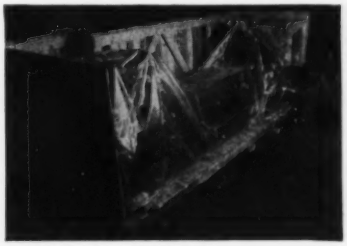

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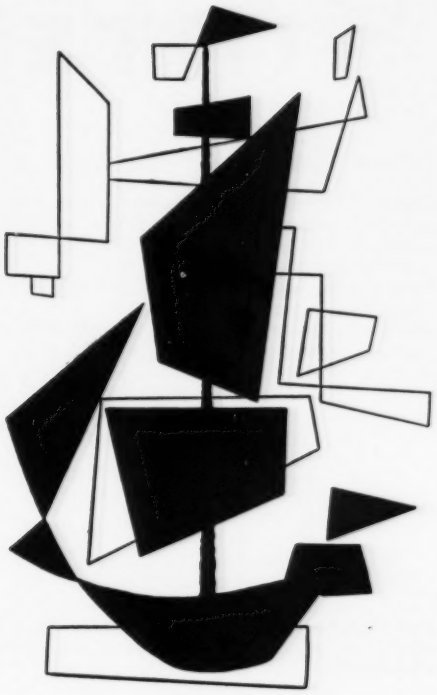

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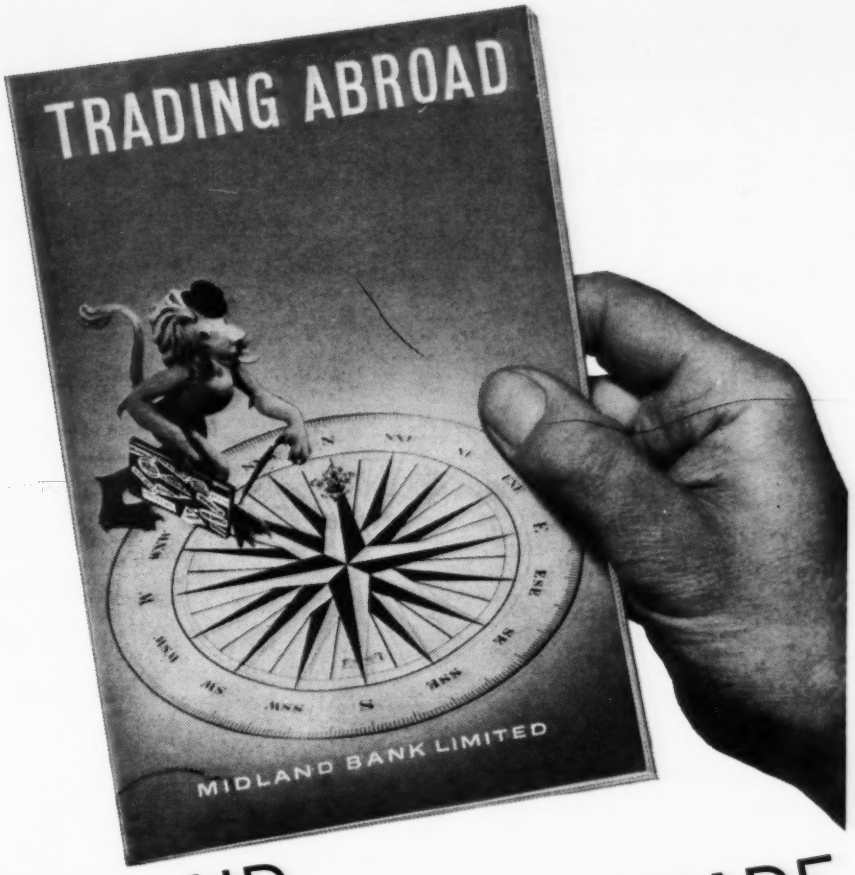

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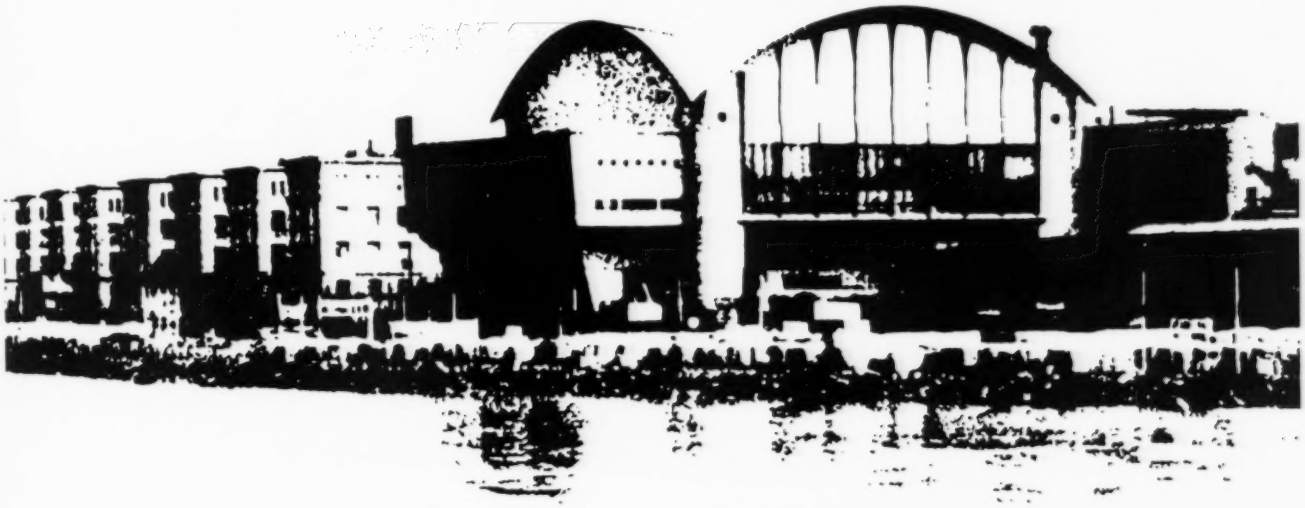

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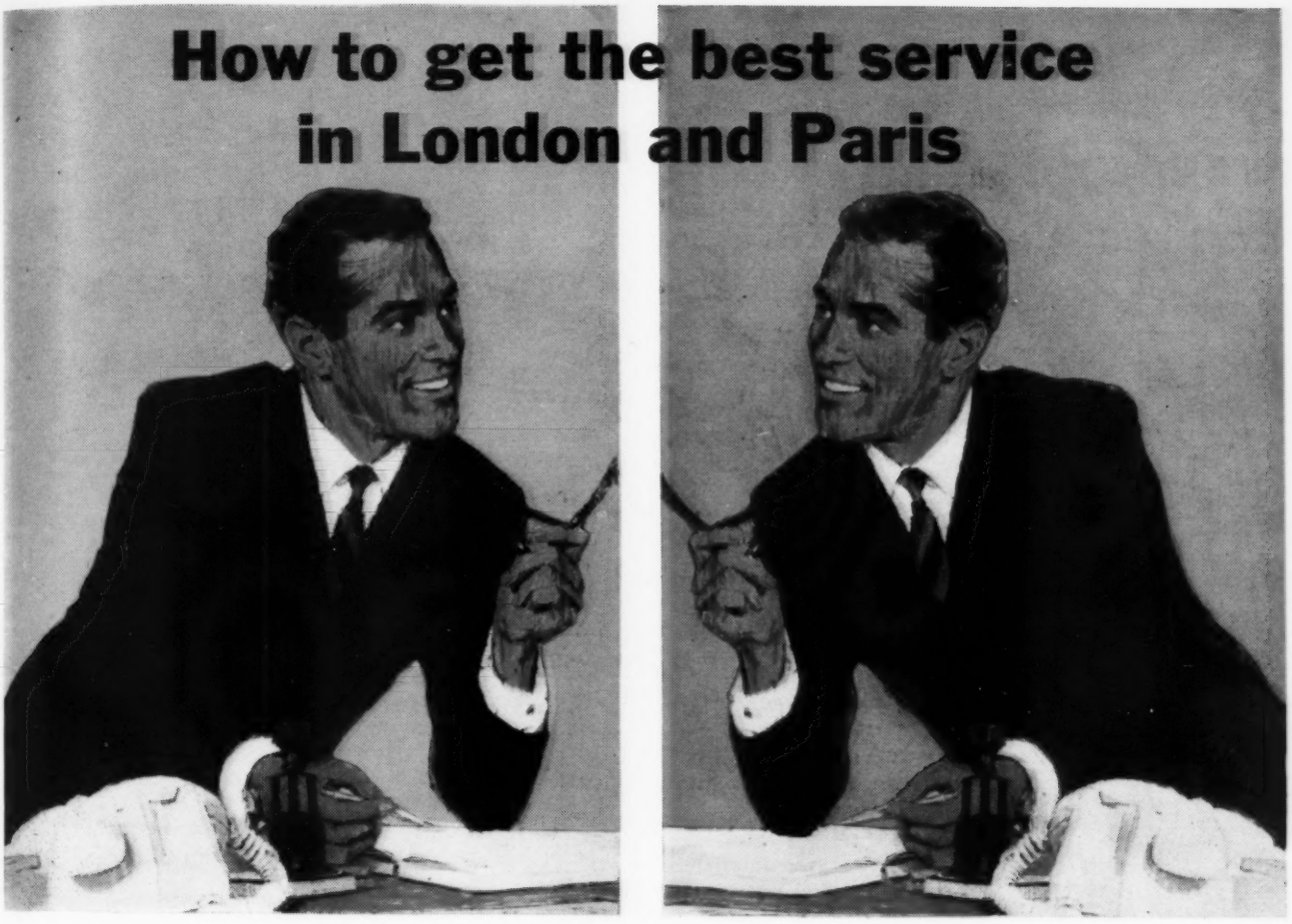

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The answer's simple: whatever the destination in this country or in France, you need an organisation that offers the know-how and experience of many years of continental trade. You need the help of a staff of experts who will streamline intricate shipping procedures and take care of all the details. In short, you need to contact us. In association with Hernu, Peron S.A., we offer an unrivalled service to and from the continent by rail and sea, as well as airfreight groupage, and direct road trailer services.

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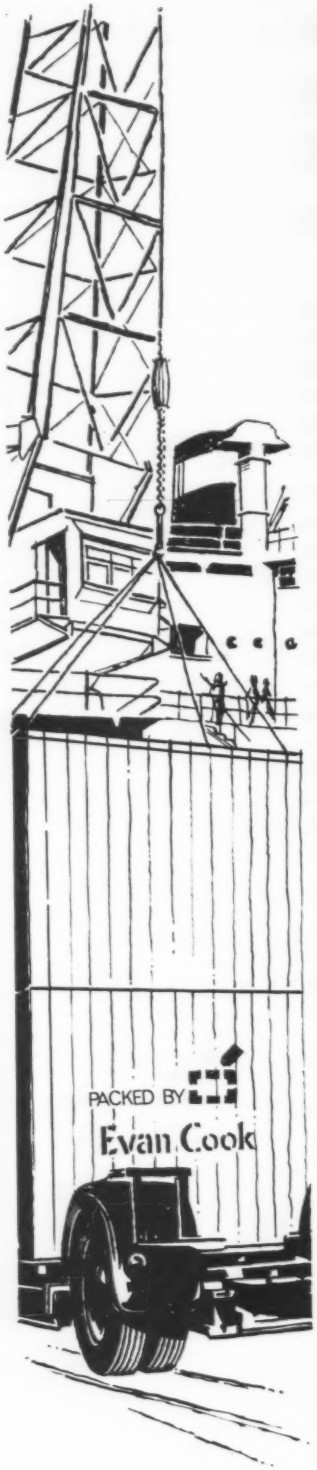

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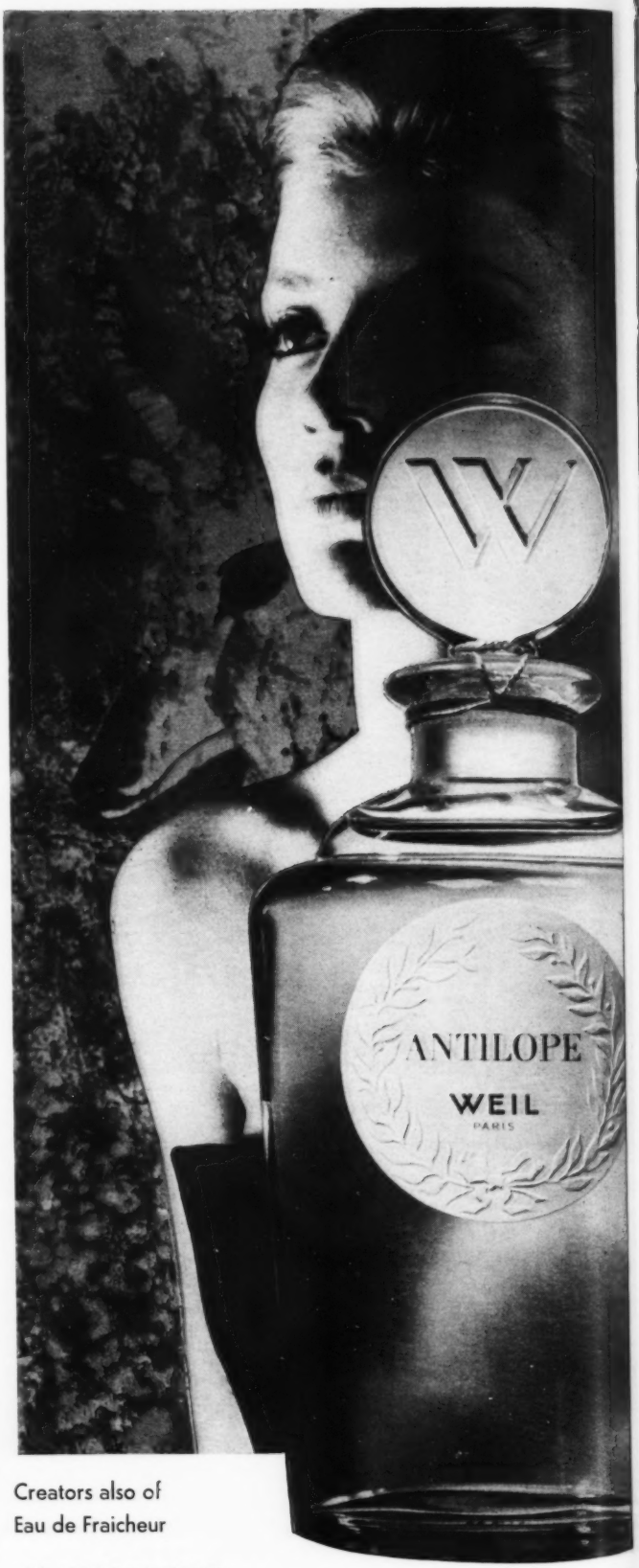

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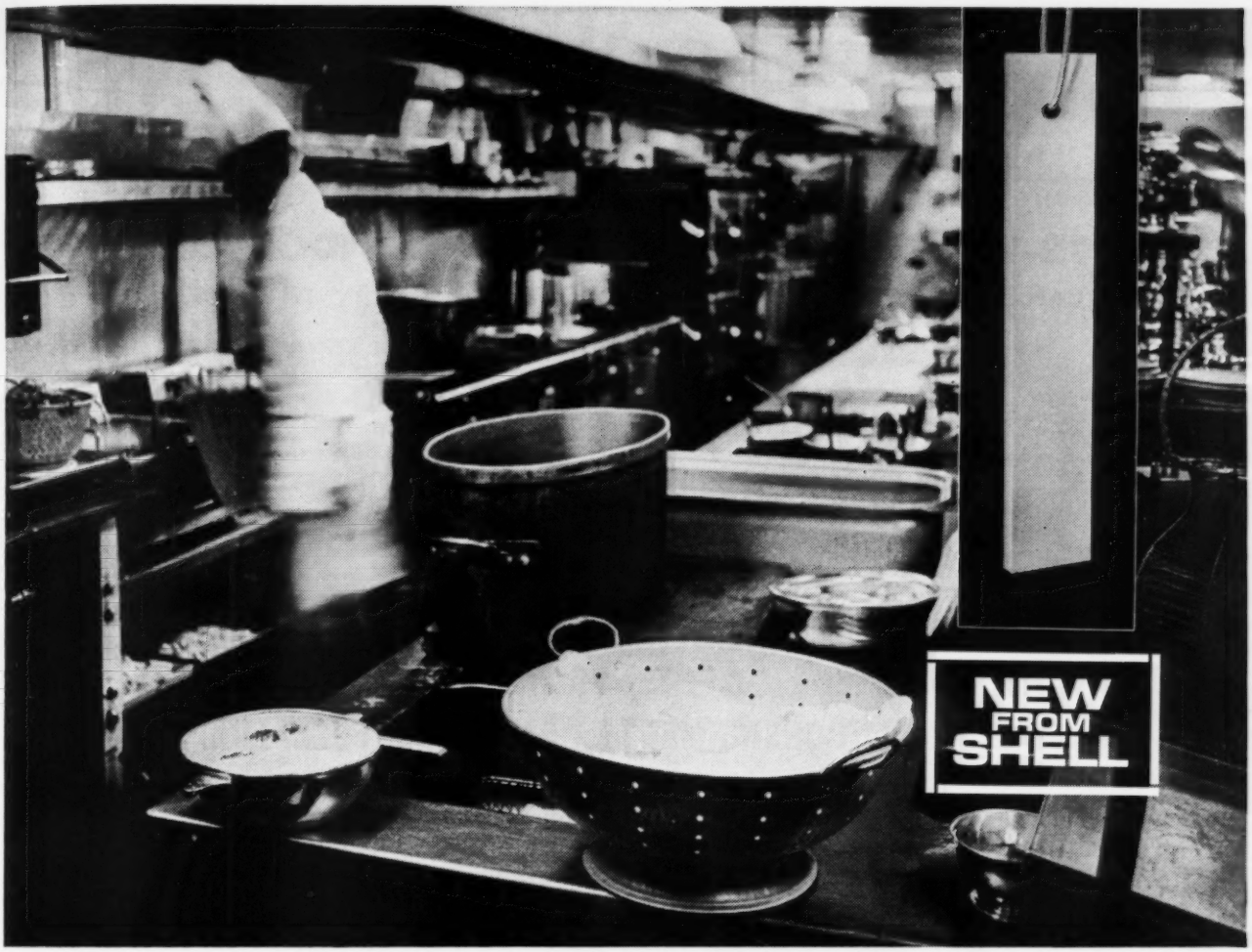

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VAPONA PEST STRIPS

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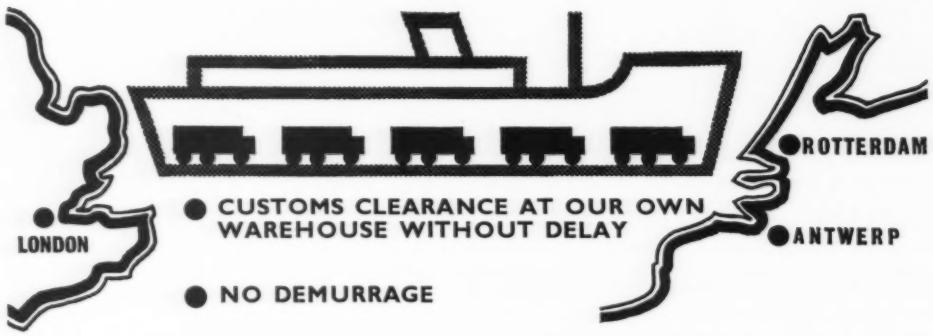

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Telephone: Dragon 37-41-85/37-41-86/37-05-15.

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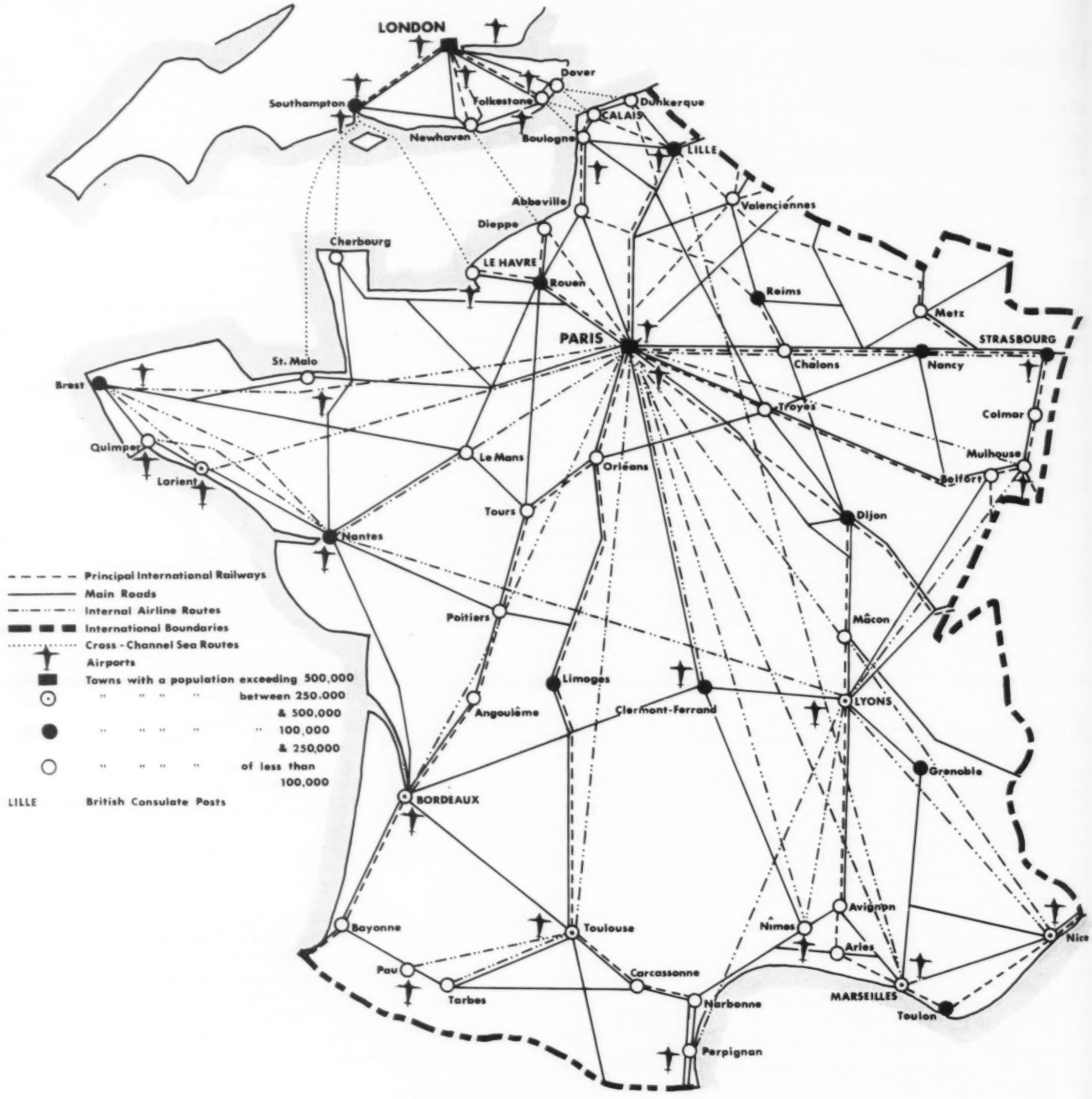
Road, rail and air services in France (see also article on page 44)



France—a big market

by F. C. Everson, CMG, Minister (Economic), HM Embassy, Paris

WE SOLD £185 million worth of British goods to France last year. This was good going; yet, when we look at the performance of some of our main competitors and recall that France is our nearest neighbour, we see that there is a lot of scope for expansion. The freight on goods exported to France from Britain adds only 1 or 2 per cent to the cost. Yet the Americans sell twice as much as we do and the Germans 3½ times. Should we not do better?

France is no longer a slightly poorer and slightly old-fashioned member of the European family of nations. There are nearly 50 million Frenchmen and, as a result of a greater rate of growth of *per capita* income in France compared with Britain in recent years, each of them, on average, now has rather more cash in his pocket than his counterpart in Britain. The table in the middle of this page gives some comparative basic figures for Britain and France. While it is difficult to make a precise comparison of the standard of living in the two countries – generally higher prices in France, for food in particular, would offset larger incomes in money terms – there can be no dispute that today France enjoys a very high level of material prosperity.

France and Britain Compared

	France	Britain
Population: Total	48 m.	54 m.
Civil employment: employed	18·9 m.	24·6 m.
Agriculture	*3·9 m.	1·0 m.
Industry	*7·4 m.	11·7 m.
Services	*7·4 m.	12·0 m.
Production of electricity (in 1,000 M.Kwh.)	88	163
Dwellings completed (1,000)	336	308
G.N.P. (per capita) in £ (approx.)	*544	*522
Cars	*6·2 m.	*6·7 m.
Inhabitants per car	*7·6	*8·0
Televisions in use	*3·4 m.	*12·2 m.
Radio and television licences	*13·8 m.	*15·6 m.
Telephones	*4·6 m.	*8·5 m.
Imports (in £)	3,144 m.	4,820 m.

*1962 figures, otherwise 1963

How has this situation come about? There are, of course, many reasons and not the least among them has been the transfer of surplus agricultural manpower to industrial production on a scale not possible, for example, in Britain. But perhaps the largest single factor has been the planned development of the French economy which began soon after the end of the war. French planning is not compulsory; it does not require anybody to invest their money in a particular way, it involves no compulsion to buy any particular kind of goods. It is indicative planning. The French plan is a complex of figures, each related to the others, which indicates partly what the planners think will happen and partly what they hope will happen. The Government decides upon the main lines of the plan after consultation with experts and with committees representing various sectors of industry and the population. Once the plan is adopted, the Government, industrialists, merchants and the Trade Unions all expect that the main lines of the plan will be followed. Since the Government is itself a big spender and controls not only the nationalized industries but a number of mixed companies in which it holds shares, the Government can exercise a strong influence in favour of leading the growth of the economy along the paths indicated by the plan. Industrialists are pre-disposed to follow. They may expect that production will increase, that labour will be available, that houses, roads and vehicles will be constructed more or less in accordance with the pattern of the plan and that therefore there will be a market for their goods if they themselves also follow the indications of the plan. Thus, the plan exercises a strong influence on the direction and amount of the growth of the French economy.

In recent years French production has been increasing at about 5 per cent per annum. The increase in French foreign trade, however, has been much greater as a result of fiscal policies and the progressive liberalization of imports. For a time British exporters made good use of this opportunity, as can be seen from the following table:

Year	Total French Imports (million francs)	Imports from Britain (million francs)	Increase in Imports from Britain over previous years	British share of French Imports
			Per cent	Per cent
1960	31,016	1,137	16·3	3·7
1961	32,992	1,487	30·8	4·5
1962	37,134	1,925	29·5	5·2
1963	43,100	2,577	33·8	6·0
1964	49,719	2,686	4·2	5·4

To what are we to attribute the falling off in 1964 from the remarkably successful British effort in previous years?

France is a member of the Common Market and has been reducing her tariffs on goods imported from the other member countries. Goods imported from Germany, Italy, Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg pay only 30 per cent of the standard rate since January 1, 1965. This gives our continental competitors a considerable advantage. But the Americans and the Swedes are in the same boat as the British; their goods, too, have to pay the full external tariff. Their exports to France did not decline in 1964; on the contrary, they increased even faster. This seems to show that the tariff discrimination exercised by France as a member of the European Economic Community has not been of crucial significance in slowing down the expansion of British exports to France. Nor does it appear that British prices have risen to such an extent as to render them uncompetitive, except in certain lines of goods. British exports to France could go on expanding if the effort of the previous years were sustained.

There is one other factor in the situation, but this, too, is not dis-

Display of Carr's biscuits at a kiosk on the Eiffel Tower. Carr & Co. Ltd. of Carlisle, have sold their biscuits in France for at least 60 years.

criminatory against the British. In 1963 the French economy became over-expansive and there were signs that inflation was sending up prices and salaries. The Government therefore introduced a Stabilization Plan to check inflation.

Prices were blocked at the September, 1963 level; the expansion of bank lending was limited first to 12 per cent per annum and then to 10 per cent; employers and trade unions were asked to go steady with wage increases, and some other measures were taken to limit demand and the pressure for higher wages and prices. The Plan had an immediate effect on prices. For several months the index of retail prices almost ceased to rise. The expansion of the monetary circulation slowed down. For a time production and, with it, the rapid increase in wages, remained unaffected, but towards the end of 1964 they also rose less rapidly. In September the index of industrial production was only about 4 per cent above the level of a year before. This policy of restraint naturally gave rise to resentment in many sectors of the community, but the Government held firmly to its policy. The coping stone of the Plan was the presentation to Parliament of a balanced budget for 1965. For the first time since the days of Poincaré, the revenue will suffice to meet not only all current expenses of the Administration, but also its new borrowing.

Have the French then managed to find a way of controlling the growth of their economy without running into a dangerously inflationary situation? The question cannot be answered with certainty. There are those who think that restraint has gone too far. The increase in production has fallen below 5 per cent per annum. Industrialists have had their margins squeezed between fixed prices and rising wages, with the consequence that self-financing by firms has declined; indeed private investment has probably not increased for nearly two years. There is still a source of inflationary pressure in the shortage of labour and the government has to steer a careful course between the risk of allowing inflation to be resumed on the one hand and, on the other, of forcing the economy into a recession.

Guide lines for the future are being laid down; the Fifth Plan covering the years 1966-70, inclusive, is under public discussion. Its main outlines were approved by the Government and presented to Parliament for debate. The main issue is whether France could adopt a rate of expansion greater than 5 per cent without running into an inflationary situation. A rate of expansion of 5 per cent per annum has in fact been chosen as the highest that is feasible.

The choice of this rate, combined with other unchangeable factors such as the expected rate of growth in the population, enables the planners to calculate other growth figures. Household consumption is expected to increase by 4½ per cent per annum; investment in industry by 5·7 per cent. Foreign trade must go up by nearly 10 per cent per annum, in both directions, if the internal requirements of the Plan are to be met. In adopting these figures and the Plan as a whole the French Government gives some warranty that the French economy will continue on its steady upward course.

Changes in French spending

The Plan tells us in which sectors the advance is likely to be the greatest. The French spend a high proportion of their incomes on food, but it is a declining proportion and it will go on declining. They spend more than the British on clothing; this expenditure is likely to continue to increase at a steady rate. They spend less than the British on accommodation; in this sector they will be catching up on us to some extent and this means that the extraordinarily heavy programme of expenditure on housing, on which they have already embarked, will continue. Although the table shows that the French completed only slightly more dwellings than the British in 1963 and their dwellings are probably generally rather smaller, mostly flats, the number under construction was half as large again. This foreshadows a heavy demand for all kinds of builders' hardware, including heating systems, electrical fittings and apparatus, plumbers' goods, paints and furnishings of all kinds.

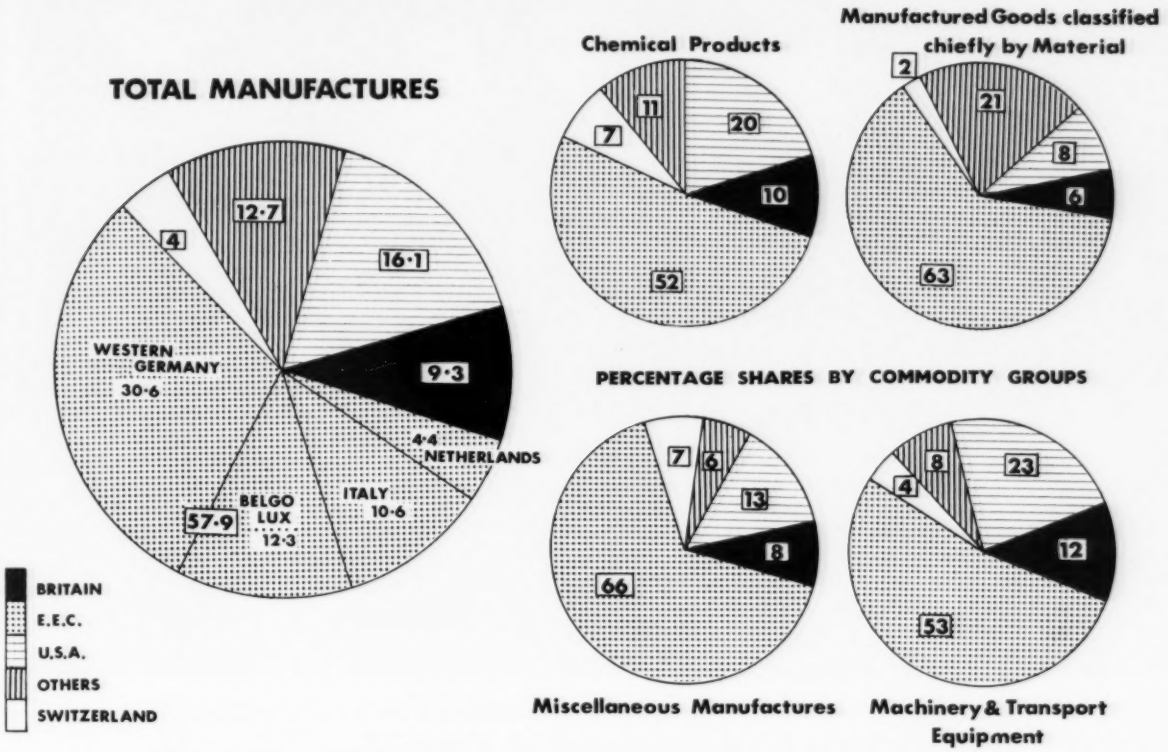
Other sectors which are likely to expand at a greater than average rate are transport and telecommunications (7·7 per cent per annum), hygiene and health (7·3 per cent) and expenditure on leisure (6·5 per cent). The first of these figures points to a heavily increased demand for motor transport and its accessories. Although the French already have more cars than the British in proportion to population, the demand is still high. There are going to be opportunities for equipping new hospitals and new schools, and under the heading of 'hygiene and health' can be foreseen a vastly expanded demand for all kinds of toilet products. The trade in pharmaceuticals is hampered by French regulations. With investment resuming its advance, with more than 20 per cent of the resources of the French nation going into investment there must be a heavy demand for contractors' plant and for many kinds of industrial machinery. In all these branches there will be opportunities for foreign suppliers and among them there must be a very wide range of goods which can be supplied at competitive prices from Britain.

We shall not obtain our fair share of this expanding market without an intensive effort. The competition of the other countries in the Common Market, building up to take full advantage of the eventual elimination of customs barriers between the six countries, will become even more formidable. The French show a strong preference for French goods, if they can get them. There are some trades in which French regulations make it difficult to supply the market from abroad. In most trades it is essential to supply to metric measurements and to comply with French standards. But the prosperity of the French nation goes with not only an increase but also a broadening of their demand. They are asking for an ever-increasing variety of goods – for the latest and most efficient equipment for their factories and for consumer goods that are different. Whereas foreign trade provided 10 per cent of the gross national product in 1960, it is to amount to 15 per cent of it in 1965 and 20 per cent in 1970.

The French nation is becoming more youthful. The under 25s are a rapidly increasing sector of the population. In 1962 one-third of the population was under 20 years of age. Their elders complain that this generation is abandoning the high and critical standards of the past. French education is becoming, albeit rather late in the day, more technical and less literary. The young do not read so much; they watch and listen. A little later than the British, a lot later than the Americans, they are catching up with the 20th century way of living. They are looking at the same time for greater comfort and for more adventurous outlets for their energies. It is modern furniture rather than Louis XVI, a car or a scooter rather than a bicycle or the Metro that they go for; television and pop music, mountaineering, skiing and sailing are their diversions. Milk bars and supermarkets are beginning to modernize the French retail distribution system. The era of youth is creeping up on this country of old and glorious traditions. The young will readily accept new goods and indeed are always thirsty for novelty.

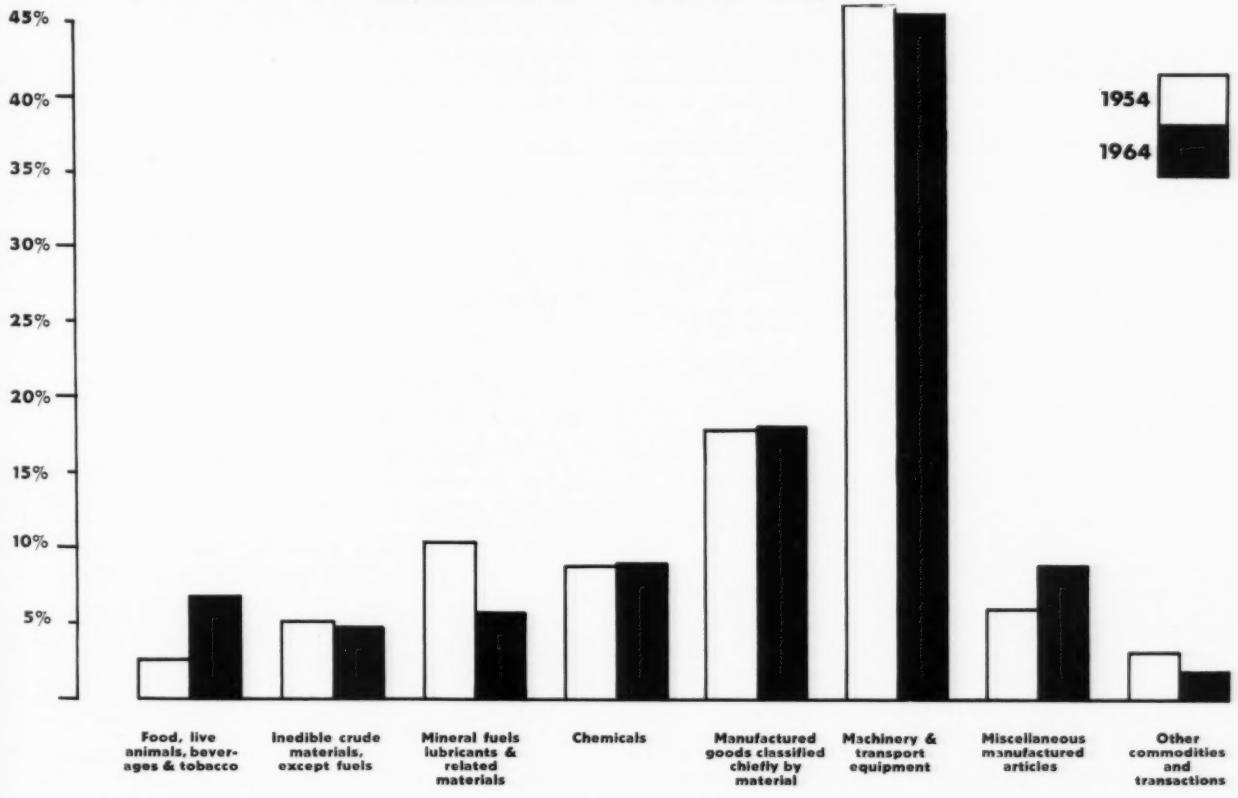
In spite of the problems which the French market poses, familiar to many British exporters already, but overcome by them as the trade figures show, this country, our nearest neighbour, should be taking a still greater proportion of our exports. The problems which the French market presents are dealt with in other articles in this supplement. They can be overcome. The prospects for the future sketched out in this article show that it will be worth while.

FRENCH IMPORTS OF MANUFACTURES JAN-SEPT. 1964



UNITED KINGDOM EXPORTS TO FRANCE 1954 AND 1964

PERCENTAGE SHARES BY COMMODITY GROUPS



Trade exchanges between the United Kingdom and France

by Georges Libersart, Minister Plenipotentiary, Commercial Counsellor, French Embassy, London

TRADE EXCHANGES between the United Kingdom and France are of exceptional interest not only by reason of their considerable volume, but because of their constant increase.

In absolute value the amount of business done reached the figure of £384 million in 1964.

Expressed dynamically rather than statistically, the volume of trade has more than doubled in ten years.

If these basic facts are striking, a more detailed analysis equally merits particular attention, for although the mutual exports of the two countries show a favourable trend over a long period, the growth rates show none the less a marked difference.

French sales to Great Britain have developed satisfactorily since they have increased by 90 per cent during the last 11 years.

But British sales to France have progressed even more rapidly since they have seen an increase of 160 per cent.

It is therefore important, within this general framework, to examine French exports to the British market by trying to consider three different aspects:

- The commercial rhythm.
- The technical structure.
- The economic conjuncture.

I Global increase in French exports

The increase in French sales has resulted from several factors. For one thing, the revival of France's economic potential and the rehabilitation of her financial situation have been of direct benefit to the great upsurge in exports. Again, the efforts of French businessmen have progressively been directed towards the British market. And, finally, the policy of freeing trade, applied by both countries, has made it possible to increase the flow of trade.

Thus it is that, in the course of the successive stages reached over the past ten years, the volume of French sales has risen from the level of £97 million in 1954 to that of £184 million in 1964.

British imports from France	£ million	Change %
1954	97	
1955	136	+40.2
1956	112	−17.6
1957	110	− 1.7
1958	100	− 9.0
1959	104	+ 4.0
1960	132	+26.9
1961	143	+ 8.3
1962	131	− 8.3
1963	154	+17.5
1964	184	+20.1

II Technical structure

The traditional structure of Franco-British trade, based on the complementary nature of their production, has slowly changed since the end of the war.

Formerly it was characterized by an exchange of foodstuffs and semi-finished articles against manufactured goods from across the Channel.

But as France's economic development became more marked, the lag in techniques in certain sectors has been eliminated, and more and more finished articles have been offered on the British market.

Sales of manufactured goods now account for 60 per cent of total French exports. They thus represent the largest and most active sector.

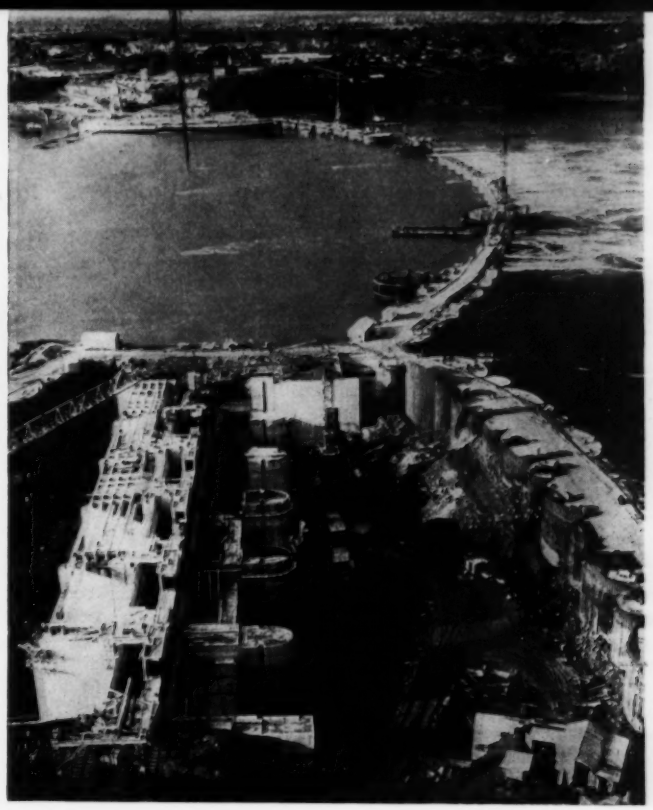
Thus the age of complementary trade gives way to the age of interdependence. Two great industrial countries like Great Britain and France, far from slackening off their reciprocal business as they reach a more complex stage in their economy, even increase their exchange of costly and highly developed products which an ever-advancing technology makes possible.

Nevertheless, the traditional frameworks still remain apparent in Franco-British trading.

Page 22:
H. E. Baron de Courcel, French Ambassador in London (extreme left) inaugurating a magnificent presentation in London recently of the wines of France.

Below:
The latest Caravelle — an example of French aviation achievement.

Right:
A factory on the Rance, using tidal energy.



This is particularly so in the field of agricultural and food products which hold second place in our trade and represent a quarter of all exports.

Wines and spirits account for £20 million and show a regular upward trend. They find a first-class clientele in Great Britain which in 1963 was France's number one customer in the world.

Another field which is similarly worthy of note for its past progress and its future promise is that of fruit and vegetables. Although the value of these sales, amounting to £7 million, is not yet comparable to the Italian, Spanish and Dutch figures, France's climatic situation and the equipment of her horticultural sector in the Southern part of the country will make it possible for her to offer produce in increasing quantities and of matchless quality.

Finally, oil products and raw materials supply a considerable part of the British market and bear witness to the diversity of French exports.

III The economic conjuncture

The acceleration of trade exchanges between Great Britain and France is linked to a third phenomenon which illustrates the influence of alternate phases in the economic situation.

This incidence of general activity on trade shows itself in several ways.

Firstly, the movement of trade shows a remarkable continuity over a long period of time. Great Britain reserves for her imports from France an extremely stable proportion in relation to her total imports. In 1938 she devoted 2.6 per cent of her global imports to French products, and has increased this percentage to an average of 3 per cent over the past ten years.

The relative position of British purchases in relation to overall French exports is, however, lower in comparison to former years, for France has more markedly increased her trade with the countries of continental Europe than with Great Britain.

Secondly, the development of French sales shows an extreme sensitivity to the internal situation in Great Britain. The chronology of their various stages shows a close correlation with the calendar of British prosperity. The graph of French exports largely reflects the periods of expansion or depression in the United Kingdom and confirms the extent to which Western economies are interdependent.

That is why, to sum up, the nature of Franco-British trade is especially encouraging, for the prosperity of one of the economies is immediately beneficial to the other. This community of interests explains the increase in British sales to France by some 60 per cent during 1962 and 1963. Similarly, the increase in French sales to Great Britain, which amounted to 40 per cent during 1963 and 1964, was due, amongst other factors, to the recovery of British economic activity during that period.

This is also a determining fact for the future of trade between the two countries. For it makes it possible not only to stress the advantages of economic harmonization, but also to limit the presumed damage arising from disparities in customs duties. In fact, the results registered up to now have not been able to confirm that tariff differences between the European zones have led to any marked upheavals in the flow of trade.

For the long-term future it is permissible to hope that the success of the Kennedy negotiations will largely reduce obstacles of this nature.

For the short-term future there is, nevertheless, a fear that the present situation on the British market will affect the development of French exports.

Although it is difficult to forecast the effects of the British steps to recovery, especially the surcharge, it is fairly safe to anticipate a marked decline in French sales in 1965.

Obviously all countries recognize the need for a balance of payments and the necessity for the economic stability of a great nation. Every country is hoping for a strengthening of Britain's economic situation and anxiously awaits the speedy return to normal conditions of international trade. For the United Kingdom has always been the qualified spokesman for the free activity of trade between the more enterprising countries.

The history of economic relations between France and Britain since the war has provided constant justification of this doctrine, and the elimination of restrictions has invariably been of benefit to both countries.

It is therefore permissible to express the hope that a favourable development will make it possible to strengthen commercial freedom and to increase trade between Britain and France since the strength of the ties that bind them depends as much on the interdependence of their economies as on the constancy of their traditional links.

How the Export Council for Europe can help you

by A. G. Norman, DFC, Deputy Chairman, Export Council for Europe

THE MESSAGE which springs from the pages of this supplement is clear and simple – France and the fast-changing French economy merit the closest attention of every British business. The 'economic miracles' of West Germany and Japan have had the full glare of publicity but it is doubtful whether enough is known of the amazing transformation which has taken place in France in the last decade.

What more does an investor or exporter want for a target than a country with a high rate of growth, stable government, a strong currency, a large population with fast-rising standards and an increasingly liberal commercial policy founded on growing confidence in an expansive future? That is France today and the rise in British exports to France from £71 million in 1958 to £185 million in 1964 is proof of the fact that many British companies are taking advantage of the opportunities open to them.

The aims and objectives of the Export Council for Europe are two-fold:

1. To help and encourage present exporters to France to double their efforts and their penetration of the whole of the French market; and,
2. To assist new exporters to France in gaining the knowledge and help which can make their first efforts productive and profitable.

How does the Export Council approach these tasks?

The first need is to identify the growth spots – the market opportunities – and although much has been published on this theme by the Export Council, the Board of Trade, the FBI, Trade Associations and the Chambers of Commerce, it is true to say that the work is never complete. In an economy which is growing fast there are swift changes in taste and in the needs of the moment, so the Export Council and its sponsoring authorities have a continuing task in this field. The next step is to measure the extent of British and competitive exploitation of the particular field in question and if the indicators are positive, the Export Council will organize or support inward and outward missions with specific targets in mind. Several rewarding exercises of this type have been organized and more are on the stocks. This also is a continuing activity which, in the case of France in particular, will be stepped up in the future.

There is indeed plenty of evidence that French buyers are highly receptive to hard and consistent selling of products with the right price/performance characteristics. The increased sales of many British capital goods over the last few years bear witness to this fact. In the field of consumer products there have been a number of successful store promotions and these also are on the increase. The aim of the Export Council is to encourage growth in this direction with the longer term objective of being able to justify larger scale promotions in the future.

What are the lessons which have been learnt by members of the Export Council and by many others in the last three years?

The outstanding lesson is the need for thorough preparation and the need to obtain and study closely the known facts and statistics which affect any particular product or product group. These can be obtained from a variety of well-known sources – the French Four Year Plans, the British Embassy and the Chamber of Commerce in Paris, the clearing banks here and in Paris, the Board of Trade, the FBI, Chambers of Commerce in Britain and market research organizations.

Correct preparations will save many headaches later and it follows that visits to France for participation in French exhibitions and store promotions as testing operations are an excellent means of sizing up the situation and gaining first hand experience of trading methods, distribution and pricing. It has been said by more than one experienced manufacturer that it takes six months of preparation and evaluation before the appointment of an agent or distributor should be made. This will inevitably depend upon the product and other pertinent factors, but the need for thorough and adequate preparation cannot be stressed too much. There is nothing particularly 'French' about this procedure, but each market has its own special conditions and its own particular road blocks which have to be studied and taken into account. France is certainly no exception and the relationship between Paris and the other great centres of French population and activity is of great importance to the experienced exporter as well as to the newcomer.

A large part of the rise in French imports in recent years has been due to a high level of consumer demand and in consequence there has been emphasis on the special opportunity for British manufacturers to supply some of this need. Advice has been given to avoid too much concentration on the traditional centre of Paris and to note that the development of French regional responsibilities for industrial and agricultural development has brought into focus the importance of provincial areas, some of which are showing signs of rapid growth.

It was for this reason that the Export Council for Europe arranged last year (April 1964) for a detailed survey to be carried out in the Rhône-Alpes Region, which, with a population of over four millions and such thriving centres as St. Etienne, Grenoble, Roannes, Valence, Annecy and Chambéry, in addition to the great conurbation of Lyons, constitutes the largest French consumer market after the capital.

From this survey it was found that on the British side few manufacturers had paid the area detailed attention for some considerable time, and on the French side that retailers and public alike knew little of modern British styles and designs. It is the contention of this Export Council for Europe report, which was given wide distribution to manufacturers throughout Britain and is still available,* that valuable opportunities exist in this region where British products are still virtually unknown, *provided* that concentrated and sustained effort is made to make them known and available.

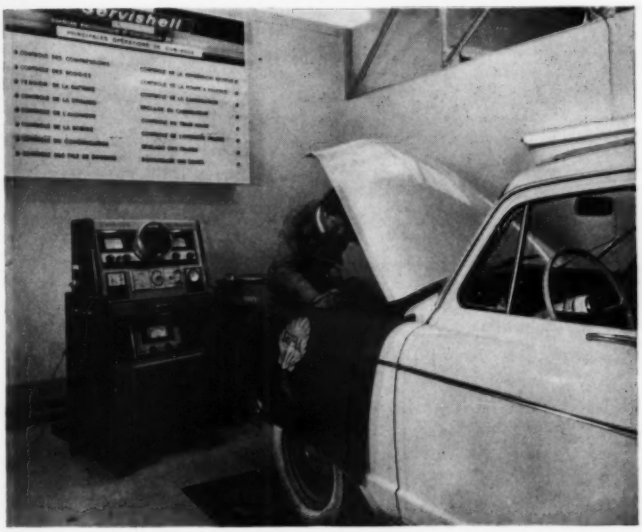
Despite ignorance of British consumer and consumer durable goods on the part of most buyers in the region it was found that there is plenty of scope for development. To quote from the report: 'Virtual absence of sales effort rather than lack of local co-operation seems to be the main reason for the very small penetration so far achieved by British manufacturers.'

Among the categories of products for which opportunities exist in the Rhône area and to which this consideration applies are: leather goods, good quality gifts, earthenware and china, knitwear, woollen dresses and coats, stationery, toilet requisites, luggage, handkerchiefs, dressing gowns, twill ties, grocery foodstuffs, toys, do-it-yourself kits, Irish linen, sports goods and some footwear.

Opportunities for consumer durable goods in the region appear to be more limited because of the influence of price multiplied by import duties, but scope is reported to exist for record players, transistor radios and tape recorders, and for some furniture and office equipment. At the time of the survey the only British goods in evidence in the shops and stores in the Rhône-Alpes region were: kitchen utensils and hand tools, toys, whisky, some grocery products and, to a lesser extent, a limited range of woollen garments.

As a first practical step the Report urged personal visits by British manufacturers and encouragement of inward missions of French buyers to Britain. In implementation of this

* "Opportunities for British Consumer and Consumer Durable Products in France (Rhône - Alpes Region)", from the Export Council for Europe, 21 Tothill Street, London, S.W.1, price 5s. 0d. post free.



second recommendation the Export Council for Europe, in co-operation with the appropriate Trade Associations in this country and Retail Trade Associations in France, organized a visit of 15 leading representatives of French retail footwear, men's ready-to-wear clothing and chemiserie interests to spend four days in May inspecting British goods in this country. The mission was divided into three groups, each having a detailed programme of visits to British stores, manufacturers and Trade Association displays, chiefly in London but with a visit to Northampton and Leicester for the footwear group. The visitors were able to note the wide variety of new designs shown to them and to discuss prices and styles with the manufacturers at first hand.

In September 1964 a further mission was organized at the suggestion of the British Embassy in Paris, this time consisting of 15 representatives from four important departmental stores and buying agencies with retail outlets all over France. These were: Au Bon Marché, Paris-France, Nouvelles Galeries Réunies and Groupement d'Achats des Grands Magasins Indépendants. With the co-operation of Trade Associations a wide range of British goods was made available for inspection, ranging from Irish linen, costume jewellery and fancy goods, leather goods, to shirts, ties and knitwear. The buyers stated subsequently that it had been a valuable experience to make personal contacts with British firms and that they considered the visit well worthwhile. The quality of the merchandise they saw was, they said, above the average sold in France. Most of the members of the mission had never been to this country before and expressed themselves agreeably surprised to find so much that was 'modern' as opposed to 'traditional' in the products they saw. Sample orders resulted.

In these and similar ways the Export Council for Europe continues to carry out its task of drawing attention to opportunities in the French market, emphasizing the need for a business-like and sustained approach to prospective customers and for modifying designs promptly where local or specialized requirements call for it.

Although French needs for consumer goods have been particularly stressed here it remains equally true that many opportunities exist for other types of products. One important requirement for the smooth development of the French Four Year Plan is a ready supply of technical equipment of a specialized kind – in such fields as refrigeration, mining, printing, power tools, automation, control apparatus for heating plant, construction equipment, chemical plant and so on.

The chief British exports to France since the war have been machinery, coal, chemicals and metals. French requirements for specialized plant and machinery are, however, very great and the Council believes that there is no reason – provided British industry remains competitive and closer personal contact is encouraged to develop through individual visits at top level (in both directions) – why more of these requirements should not be met from the resources of British industry.

Successful exporting usually involves, in the early stages at any rate, a marriage of complementary skills and knowledge between the British exporter and the French importer, agent, distributor or partner. The pressures on any really successful French partner are many and great and there is only one way of ensuring his full and vigorous collaboration – namely by keeping closely in touch with him by means of the personal visits of highly placed men who can take decisions and who can ensure the profitability of the joint enterprise. Once again these observations are applicable almost to any market, but exporters to France will confirm that good partners are not easy to find and when they are found they will need their full share of time and attention.

Top: Console by Simplex Electric Co. Ltd., Staffs., for a Barber-Green 'Batchpac' mixer exported to France.

Centre: Crypton oscilloscope engine tester, made by Crypton Equipment Ltd., Bridgwater, in use at a Shell station in France.

Lower: M. Auguste Cartoux (extreme left), managing director of Ets. Cartoux, visiting the Bletchley factory of Terrapin Ltd., with whom the French company have signed an agreement for the manufacture and marketing of Terrapin 'pack' building units in southern and central southern France. M. Cartoux is with Terrapin marketing director Athol H. I. Lorie (holding notebook) a senior production executive of Ets. Cartoux, Mme. Cartoux, and Terrapin export director Jack Ashworth.

Some promising lines for the French market

TO ATTEMPT to distinguish lines of goods which are likely to sell well in France is to invite contradiction. Whether a product will sell or not depends on so many factors, some of them intangible such as fashion, some of them difficult to work out such as competitive prices. The only way to be sure is to try.

To use the broadest of generalizations, almost anything made in Britain can be sold in France provided that the design is acceptable and the price competitive. Here is an attempt to show in which lines a well conceived attempt by a British manufacturer to break into the French market is likely to succeed.

This is not to say that the business is there for the taking. There is competition to be faced not only from the French but also from the other Common Market countries whose prices become keener as the internal tariffs of the European Economic Community are brought down towards their final abolition. But evidently the advantages enjoyed by French manufacturers on their home ground and by the Common Market partners are not decisive; Britain has a very respectable export trade with France while some of her other competitors outside the Common Market have continued to increase their sales to France by large percentages.

There may well be other lines of goods besides those mentioned here for which the prospects are promising. Perhaps the following selection will encourage other industries to examine their prospects.

Agricultural machinery

Large scale mechanization and modernization of French agriculture and an increase in the size of farm units in order to release manpower for industry are amongst the immediate aims of the French government. Indeed it is estimated that in twenty years' time there will be only half the present 3·9 million agricultural workers and that agricultural production will have doubled.

If these objectives are to be attained, the rapid growth of the import and sale of modern agricultural machinery must continue. Besides tractors there will be demand for combine harvesters, irrigation and spraying equipment, fertilizer spreading machines, grain driers, seeding equipment, and other new types of agricultural appliances. Sales of self-propelled combine harvesters with reapers between 3 and 4.20 metres increased from 2,509 units in 1960/61 to 4,000 units in 1962/63; sales of harvesters requiring traction, fell.

Many vineyards and crops are now sprayed by the most modern methods, using helicopters and turbine sprayers. The use of liquid chemicals for fertilization by irrigation and the desire to be equipped against drought continue to stimulate the need for pumps, pipes and other irrigation equipment. Plastic piping is gaining favour with farmers because of its flexibility.

Grain driers are becoming increasingly popular. Sales of seeders increased by some 34 per cent in 1963 over 1962, fertilizing equipment by 28 per cent and walking type tractors by some 9 per cent.

France already produces much of the specialized machinery required for its varied agricultural needs but there are also good opportunities for the British manufacturer.

Reports on the market in France

A SPECIAL ISSUE of the *Export Service Bulletin* was published on March 31, containing reports on the market in France for wallpaper, carpets, knitwear, dishwashers, plastic machinery, filling machinery, motor cultivators, wooden furniture, agricultural pumps and grain dryers.

British firms who wish to inquire about the reports appearing in the Bulletin should get in touch with Export Services Branch, Board of Trade, 35 Old Bailey, London, E.C.4. Tel. City 5757, Ext. 447, or TELEX 25977, quoting reference ESB 1001G.

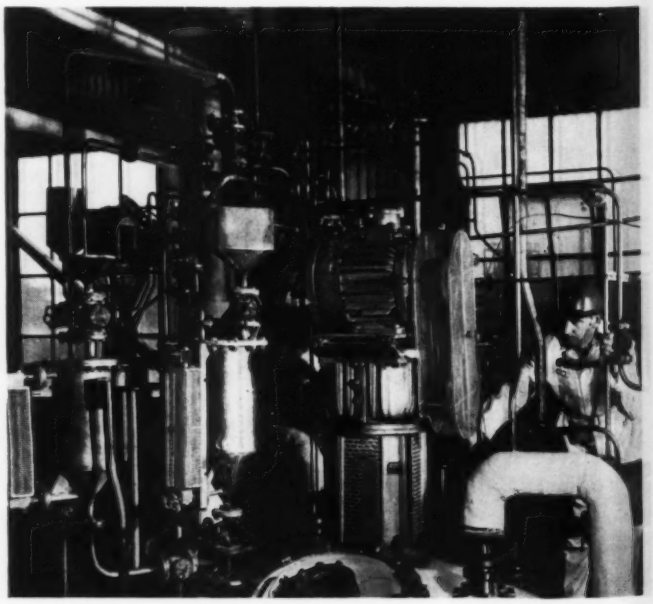
Builders' supplies

Wherever you go in France you will find an enormous amount of building activity. In the towns, sites rendered vacant by the demolition of old buildings are swiftly re-occupied by new blocks and on the fringes of every French town, especially Paris, the construction of factories, offices and blocks of dwellings, mostly several storeys high, proceeds at a great pace.

With a target of some 470,00 new homes a year by 1970, the growing demand for new building fittings and materials in glass, metal and plastic is evident.

Top: Making tungsten carbide cutting tools at the Sté Diacarb works at Courberoie (Seine), A Jones-Shipman model 310 cutter and tool grinder made by A. A. Jones and Shipman Ltd., Leicester, is being used. Model 540 surface grinders are also much in use.

Lower: A new process for making chloroprene rubbers has been developed by The Distillers Company Ltd. Early in 1966 a 20,000 ton per year plant using this process will begin production in France.



Sanitaryware

All this new building requires modern sanitary equipment. The demand is tremendous. The French industry provides for much of it, but there are good opportunities for exporters in this field, particularly if they have something rather unusual to offer. There are also opportunities in the renovation of older buildings.

As both private enterprise and government-sponsored schemes will contribute to the building programme there will be a need for 'luxury' as well as standard quality fittings. Whereas price and metric measurements are not of prime consideration in the luxury field it is essential that fittings for the local government schemes be in metric sizes if the British manufacturer is to sell to this market.

Ceramic materials are in favour for bidets, W.C. pans, wash basins etc.; 95 per cent of all equipment sold is made of enamelled stoneware and non-porous smooth vitrified porcelain. Baths are of various designs and sizes, usually of cast iron, and then, in order of preference, in enamelled steel, stainless steel or plastic. Showers are usually in enamelled stoneware or of vitrified porcelain.

Water and bath heaters are mainly of the storage heater and instantaneous heater type, operated by gas or electricity, and immersion heaters. British tapware, although recognized as of good quality, is considered to be too 'traditional'. Competition in the brassfoundry section is fierce.

There would seem to be possibilities for the sale of British vitrified steel sinks and water heating equipment (British products in this field being unknown).

Top: A demonstration of David Brown agricultural equipment before a big crowd near Orly Airport just outside Paris.

Lower: Gaskell and Chambers (Non-Drip Measures) Ltd., Croydon, have been steadily increasing their export trade with France. The measures are often incorporated in the French-made refrigerated cabinet as shown in this picture taken in the Moulin Rouge.

Heating equipment

Most newly constructed buildings are equipped with central heating, the most usual being the conventional type radiator or, particularly in the case of large blocks of flats, heating through the floor or ceiling, using coal or oil fired burners. There are insufficient radiators to satisfy current needs, which are for both the panelled and the louvred type, the latter being rather slimmer and less heavy looking than those used in Britain.

Imports of liquid gas from Algeria, the discovery of natural gas at Lacq in Southern France and the possibility of North Sea finds should improve the future for gas central heating.

In these lines it is particularly important to study French standards and taste. It may be necessary to re-design equipment to meet French needs. In any case, the way to start is to send a representative to study the market and make contact with potential agents. There are such growth possibilities that British firms which establish themselves in France in this way may well soon have to consider manufacturing in France, for which special facilities are provided by the French government.

Clothing

One in every three Frenchmen, out of a population of 48 million, is under 20 years of age. As in Britain, the spending power of teenagers has increased enormously in recent years and much of the money goes on clothing.

The consumption of clothing in France between 1950 and 1960 went up by 52 per cent and estimates show that the 1970 figures should be 67 per cent up on 1960.

The growing popularity of ready-to-wear garments has given British clothiers an opportunity, which a few have seized, to offer garments at prices often well below those asked by the traditional individual tailors and couturières.

The 'British line' is superseding the 'Italian' style in men's suits, and the high reputation of British cloth augurs well for the sale of men's ready-to-wear suits, as one British tailor who has recently set up in France has discovered. Imports of made-up menswear from Britain in 1963 stood at 3·3 million francs.

The Frenchwoman's experience of French ready-to-wear dresses is that, if well made, they are just as expensive as a dress 'made to measure'. She therefore prefers whenever possible to use her local dressmaker. The low-cost high-quality ready-to-wear garment which a few see in London and which is becoming available in France is making her think again.

Overseas firms are taking advantage of the Paris Women's Ready-to-Wear Exhibition held in April and November each year. This serves as an important shop window to show the forthcoming season's range to international buyers. Many British clothing manufacturers and fashion houses find that, once they have made their name known, worthwhile orders can be secured through this medium.

Knitwear is a relative newcomer. In 1950 the problems of marketing knitwear were only just beginning to be tackled but by 1960 it was a booming trade. Imports of knitwear into France between 1961 and 1964 more than doubled and Britain has taken more than its share in the increase.

Why this sudden growth in demand? Because knitwear satisfies the need for practical and adaptable clothing stimulated by the rapid and recent increase in the use of the car, and for winter holidays or other leisure pursuits. Comfort has taken first place for these occasions; if elegance can be achieved too, the appeal to the French is strengthened.

British knitted goods, especially twinsets and highclass lambswool and cashmere sweaters, enjoy a reputation second to none and the difficulty is not in finding a suitable French agent but enough British manufacturers to meet the demand.

Tweeds are becoming more and more popular in France. They have four attractions for the French—warmth, durability, comfort and, last but not least, distinction.

Most of the cloth is imported in the piece and made up to suit the local fashion. Sports jackets, suits, and overcoats, women's as well as men's are the main uses. Retail prices for these garments are higher than in Britain but this only makes their acquisition more desirable. The growing tendency to go in for casual wear for the weekend hunt or for riding, and for more comfortable clothes for car and office promises well for this cloth. The attempt to use tweed for women's evening dresses has not made much headway, but the exploitation of tweed for high fashion has certainly not been exhausted.

Exporters to France might be well advised to try new designs on the market and should watch the changing fashion for colour. They should make sure that their agents are fully covering their areas of franchise.

Commercial vehicles

More and more British commercial vehicles are to be seen on the roads of France. Recently a double-decker London bus was seen in Paris, the hopeful harbinger of a new trend in Parisian public transport.

The export of commercial vehicles to France reached an all time peak in 1963 in the face of the keenest competition from foreign commercial vehicle builders.

During the 12 months ended December 1963, the number of new lorries imported into France from Britain was 2,132 valued at 28 million francs. The figures for the previous year were 1,570 vehicles valued at 22 million. Exports in 1964 were even better.

The demand for specialized vehicles, which the British industry is well equipped to meet, is bound to increase rapidly.

The policy followed by British manufacturers in adapting their commercial vehicles to continental conditions has been well rewarded as more and more French and other commercial vehicle users adopt British makes in the knowledge that in addition to their reputation for quality they now also offer the features considered essential locally. British manufacturers have been helped by measures which have brought British specifications—maximum length and breadth, weight and braking power—more into line with Continental practice.

Contractors' plant

By 1985 it is estimated that in French towns crowds will be twice their present size, suburbs four times as extensive and there will be three times as many cars in the streets.

To accommodate this growth a vast programme of road construction building and social development, both in the public and private sectors, has been given priority by the French government in its draft Vth plan for 1966-1970. These plans will certainly provide fresh openings for the sale of bigger and more modern contractors' plant.

Roads programme. The number of vehicles is expected to double between 1960-1970 and calls for an urgent programme of road improvement both within the major towns and between them. The construction of two and three lane dual motorways is increasing. One hundred and seven kilometres were completed in 1963, 136 kilometres in 1964 and 168 kilometres are planned for 1965.

Buildings. By 1970 it is planned to increase the present figure of 375,000 new dwellings a year to 470,000. The demands of the increasing population will also necessitate the construction of many new hospitals, education and social centres and recreational amenities.

The demand for heavy earth-moving equipment, graders, rollers, cranes, dumpers, etc. will increase as expansion continues and old and expended plant needs replacement. Two notable tendencies in this field are the preference for wheeled vehicles in place of the tracked variety and the growing popularity of ready-mixed concrete which should provide a good opening for the sale of mixers and transporters. Opportunities also exist for the sale of new inventions in the public works field such as the new silent pile-driving machinery or silent road drill recently introduced in the United Kingdom. The sale of equipment to plant hire companies (formed as recently as 1961-62) should also not be overlooked. Plant leasing is in its early days.

Gadgets

The French have a weakness for gadgets like any other technically advanced nation. In these days of small homes with much

Fully fashioned pure wool Shetland sweater from the range of 'St. Michael' knitwear exported to France by Marks and Spencer Ltd.

electrical and mechanical equipment, gadgetry is a growing feature of the big stores, the low priced retail chains and the provincial fairs.

The French retail chains and departmental stores are constantly on the look-out for novelties.

Household electrical apparatus

Household electrical apparatus is a rapidly expanding market in France. Favourable influences are the population increase of some half a million a year, the drift of agricultural workers to the towns, the scarcity and high cost of domestic labour giving rise to a demand for time and labour saving devices, particularly where the married woman goes out to work, and the increased purchasing power of the French.

The French government has a huge housing programme; the Electricity Authority subsidises household electrical installations and provides increased power under the 'Compteur Bleu' exercise to encourage the use of items consuming large amounts of current, such as electric radiators and washing machines.

It is estimated that by 1970, 80 per cent of French households will have a refrigerator against 43 per cent in 1963, two-thirds of households will have a vacuum cleaner against 36 per cent and half the households a washing machine, against 32 per cent.

The demand for small electrical apparatus, such as hairdriers, food mixers, coffee grinders, etc., is at present largely satisfied by cheap and practical French makes. There is a limited market for the better quality models but competition is keen.

The future of dishwashing machines looks promising, despite their high price. There are already several types of French and foreign origin available and the value of imports in 1963 reached 5.6 million francs.

Washing machines rate high on the French family's list for early purchase, taking precedence over television sets and refrigerators. The high cost of laundering and the little time available for the chore of washing are responsible for their success.

Common Market countries continue to enjoy the lion's share of the French import market for refrigerators, the right designs as well as price being important reasons. Electric cookers are still not very popular in France and demand is satisfied by home production. Sales in 1963 were, however, some 10 per cent up on 1962. The Electricity Authority's campaign should help in this sector.

Sales of vacuum cleaners increased from 14.58 million francs to 24 million francs between 1962-1963, Britain's share increasing from 6 million to 6.7 million only. This market should continue to increase with the growing use of fitted carpets in offices and homes.

Sound recording and reproduction equipment including TV and radio sets

Lower prices brought about by mass production methods, technological advance and fierce international competition coupled with the increased purchasing power of the Frenchman are not only bringing television sets, transistor radios, tape-recorders, record players etc., within his means but almost making them necessities of everyday life.

French home production of such equipment in 1963 was valued at 53,530,000 francs and was 24 per cent up on the previous year. Germany and Holland have been very successful in the French market and Japan is making rapid progress while British radio and T.V. sets are virtually unknown. Although 'breaking in' may not be easy, British manufacturers should not disregard this market. France ranks as the sixth nation with 4.8 million T.V. sets in 1963, or 1 set for every three households. The two national programmes operate on 819 and 625 lines although it is intended to switch over to the latter in the near future, which may offer some encouragement to British firms.

Transistor radios today account for the bulk of radio sales which numbered some 160,000 out of a total of 196,000 in 1963. As well as being ideal for holidays and outings there is a trend to use them in cars in place of the more expensive fitted car-radio.

The biggest boom has however been in tape-recorders which are becoming increasingly popular for family use providing a sound album of souvenirs, soundtracks for home cinematography and party music. Sales tripled between 1961-1963 reaching a figure of 150,000. At least one French manufacturer has recently decided to mass produce this item as 90 per cent of present requirements are imported.

Despite this high demand, record players have also remained very popular and are today well within the purchasing means of the teenager to whom it has become indispensable for his pop music and teenage parties. Imports have almost tripled in the last three years.

How to begin trading with France

FRANCE IS A PROMISING MARKET but if you have never yet tackled the job of selling there you may not know quite where to start. What are the first things to be done?

There is no substitute for a personal visit to investigate the market. But it should be well-prepared beforehand otherwise valuable time will be wasted. The Regional Offices of the Board of Trade, the Export Services Branch, the Chambers of Commerce and the Federation of British Industries have stores of knowledge about the French market, lists of agents and distributors and directories which can be consulted at short notice. If they cannot answer all your questions, they can get into direct touch with their links in France, the official Commercial Services or the British Chamber of Commerce, France.

Suppose that the Regional Officer of the Board of Trade thinks that there are good prospects for you but cannot form a very precise estimate. He will at least know what the Embassy in Paris will need in order to pursue an inquiry on your behalf. He will ask you to supply trade literature, samples and price lists. The Commercial Services will then assess your prospects and send you back lists of firms with which you can get into touch yourself. If you wish it, they will ask agents and distributors whether they are interested in the products, showing them the samples and prices. Once contacts are made, the trip to France can be undertaken without wasting time on firms who may be uninterested.

And the trip to Paris or to the provincial centres should be made. If the visit has been well prepared it will not take long. After all Birmingham to Paris takes only an hour and a half by air. The night ferry enables a London businessman to spend a working day in Paris at the expense of only a single working day in London.

The Commercial Services or the British Chamber of Commerce, France, will advise you how best to do business in France. The most obvious way of getting into the French market is to appoint an agent. Some British firms think that as France is so near and as economic conditions appear to be similar, business can be done direct from the United Kingdom. This view is not shared by people on the spot. The French market is difficult to exploit effectively from outside. Generally, imports are not bought on the initiative of the French; they must be actively sold by the exporter and this can usually best be done through a Frenchman able to press home on the spot all the selling points of the goods. He can also best advise the exporter on French taste and on the regulations which apply to the particular line of goods.

Starting in the provinces

Whether the exporter's choice falls on a man working for his own account or on a firm, whether on someone in Paris or someone in the provinces, or both, depends upon the requirements of the product. A small exporter with limited production may prefer to start with the less sophisticated provincial market or a little bit of it. France is big enough to be divided into half a dozen territories for separate agents. If a local agent does well with the product he may be able to expand into a wider territory; alternatively, additional agents can be engaged to cover other parts of the country.

The exporter whose product is mainly used by an industry concentrated outside Paris may find it advantageous to appoint an agent resident in the appropriate district. The Embassy and the appropriate Consular Officers can help him to find one. This consideration might apply to an exporter selling equipment or materials to the French textile industry, which is concentrated in the north, in part of Alsace, and in the neighbourhood of Lyons, or to the mining industry – ore-mining in Lorraine, coal-mining in the north and the St. Etienne district. There is a concentration of the furniture industry in the Vendée and here woodworking machinery can be sold. Distributors of boats

The Wormgear Division of John Holroyd & Co. Ltd., Milnrow, Rochdale, maintains a steady export trade with France. This picture shows wormgear speed reducers being packed for shipment.

are to be found in the coastal areas and in Paris. A ready-to-wear women's clothing industry is growing up in the neighbourhood of Nice. Sales of agricultural machinery must be adapted to soil conditions and the crops of a particular locality. An agent selling equipment for the cultivation of cereals might well be located in one of France's greatest cereal-growing areas, that between Paris and the northern coast, or the area to the south-west of Paris. Equipment for the use of fruit-growers or wine-growers might be distributed by agents in the areas where these crops are grown, while an exporter with something special for the dairying industry might well be advised to try Normandy first.

A large part of the import trade, perhaps 85 per cent, is concentrated in Paris and for many products the exporter coming to the French market for the first time will want to examine the possibilities in Paris first. But he should not forget that there are important distribution centres elsewhere and that H.M. Consular Officers in Bordeaux, Lille, Lyons, Marseilles and Strasbourg can help to find the right contacts if it is best to start up in the provinces.

The advisory services can give the new exporter some idea of the terms which an agent will expect, but these must in the end be thrashed out with the agent himself. Because of the very high cost of living in France and the size of the country, distributional costs are high and a commission which appears generous to a British exporter may not be acceptable to a French agent. Examples of the commission which agents expect are mentioned in another article; the rate varies tremendously from perhaps 2 per cent to as much as 17 per cent.

There are some goods which are best sold direct to a wholesale distributor or to more than one. Packaged foodstuffs such as sauces and jams are a good example (but it must be remembered that imports of foodstuffs into France are generally subject to quantitative restrictions). Other examples are hardware of all kinds, beverages, table crockery and glassware and kitchen ware. The big buyers in France are inclined to try to cut out agents and their commission. The wholesaler naturally fixes his own resale price. (Resale price maintenance is illegal in France.) Other types of buying organizations to which exporters may sell are described at greater length in another article.

Some products can only be sold through a distributor who will provide after-sales service. This applies to every kind of machinery. Nothing is more irritating to the customer than to have an expensive machine out of action for a long time because spares or expert servicing

have to be brought from a distance. The British exporter will rarely find an agent or distributor with a ready made organization for this task. It will be necessary in many cases to work out terms for setting up a depot, holding stock, maintaining a sufficient range of spares, getting together and paying a servicing team and to share the advertising costs of launching the product. There is need for a very clear understanding between exporter and distributor about how these costs shall be divided, and support from the exporter, particularly in respect of finance for setting up a depot and advertising, is almost invariably necessary. The exporter must naturally keep a close watch on the utilization of any contribution that he makes.

Sometimes it is wise to send out your own man who knows the product to explore the market and perhaps to start up a branch of your business. Many foreign firms selling highly specialized industrial equipment, specialized agricultural equipment, defence equipment or plant or materials for chemical treatment processes, for example, have found this to be the right approach. If he acts as your agent, this entails compliance with the French labour laws and with the rules relating to double taxation and the repatriation of profits. The establishment of a branch is a fairly complicated process on which local advice must be taken. The question sometimes arises how much more should a British employee be paid than when he was at home; the answers given by British businessmen in France range from 20 per cent to 80 per cent more than the salary in Britain. It depends on what the man is expected to do out of his pay and whether he is going to live in France more or less as he does at home or on a more expensive scale.

Whatever form of representation a British exporter adopts, he should carefully consider and clearly establish his relations with the representative so as to avoid subsequent haggling over details. The complaints which reach the Official Services about British exports to France largely flow from the difference of view taken by exporters and their representatives over the terms of the understanding. There are complaints about the expenses thrown on the agent; he may think that he is required to do too much advertising, to bear unexpected expenses for entertainment and to take all the loss involved in replacing defective goods. Agents are severely hampered by imperfect quotations. Deliveries are another source of complaint; the representative is committed and he depends on the exporter's promptitude. Quality must be maintained. On the other hand, the exporter has a right to insist on the agent maintaining a reasonable stock of goods and of spares and the means of giving service quickly when it is needed.

The old advice about using French language, standards and measurements is still not taken. Put yourself in the position of a British buyer being urged to buy French goods. Naturally the buyer would expect to be given details of the product in English, with its British weights and measures and the price, landed in Britain, in £ s. d.

The language barrier is real; few French businessmen are comfortable working in English. Even if the top men in a French concern are willing to speak English, their staff cannot work in the language. So if you are going to sell in France you must be prepared to put your descriptive literature into perfect French, to talk French with prospective agents, distributors or customers, to work to French standards, to quote French weights and measures, and to calculate your prices c.i.f. (if not delivered to customer) in francs. Later you will also have to get any instructions for use put into French.

There are a few exceptions. Some businessmen are good at English and like using it. There are even a few trades where the French buyer is so familiar with British measures that he will order in them, but even in these cases, export documents must be made up in metric weights and measures, so that little is gained.

When you are putting your English into French, be careful and take advice about the choice of a translator. The French are sensitive about the misuse of their beautiful and exact language and, although they themselves make jokes about 'franglais,' they are apt not to find it funny if others make a hash of their tongue.

Finally, nothing boosts confidence so much as close personal contact between exporter and agent. It is most useful if the exporter brings the agent and his technical staff over to the factory from time to time; it is equally important that the exporter should see not only how the agent works but also what the customers think of him.

The outline of relations between principals and agents set out herein contains no unusual terms. They are such as you would expect of your own suppliers. Your French agents and customers expect them too.

Are my prices competitive?

THE AVERAGE BUYER IN FRANCE, from a businessman to a housewife purchasing soapflakes, by nature regards the price of the article he or she is seeking with a very keen eye. But though many French people still tend to buy the cheaper article, experience coupled with a Government campaign directed towards better manufacturing standards is slowly leading them to pay more attention to quality.

British exporters may therefore take some comfort from this—but not too much. They would be well advised, especially if they produce goods similar to or identical with those made by their French competitors, not to depend altogether on the superior quality of their own products. Technical advantage, for example in the case of specialised equipment, is something apart and here price is not always of paramount importance, but it would be wrong to count on this where superiority is either not immediately apparent or is relatively unimportant.

Consequently, prices of British exports must be really competitive. Equality with French prices, unless accompanied by some other attraction, rarely interests French buyers. With reason they ask why they should undertake the wearisome routine of importation if they can so easily telephone a French supplier who can deliver the next day at the same price.

When the more standard items of capital goods are involved, such as machine tools or plastics and textile machinery, the price is almost always important to the user since he is faced with a war on two fronts: one with his French competitors and the other with those of foreign countries, especially those in the Common Market. To remain solvent he must keep his investment within bounds.

The would-be British exporter to the French market must reckon on a sizeable addition to his ex-factory price by the time his goods reach the French customer. Although freight charges to this nearby market are not generally heavy, other on-costs (which are discussed in detail later in this article) are somewhat heavy. The main factor is the French tariff which was formerly high on manufactured goods but on most items it is now coming down towards the Common External Tariff of the EEC. Then there is the French sales tax, normally 25 per cent, though as this is charged on French-produced goods as well as on imports it is not in itself a handicap to British sales. The agent's commission is the third important addition to prices; French agents expect heavy commissions, which average perhaps 6 per cent but can go up to as much as 17 per cent. Including minor charges and taxes and freight in France, British goods may bear total on-costs of *e.g.* 60 per cent on textiles, 50-60 per cent on light engineering products and something approaching 70 per cent on heavy machinery. These are, of course, only indicative figures, every consignment differing according to circumstances, but they do show that export prices must be pared to the bone if British goods are to sell in France.

The newcomer to the French market will naturally ask, 'How am I then to know whether my prices are competitive?' The short answer to this is, 'Come over and take a look round'.

This presents no great problem to a manufacturer of retail consumer goods. He can visit the shops and the big stores in Paris or any other large city and examine prices for himself; he can buy newspapers, often carrying full page advertisements—*France-Soir* in particular—and he can purchase catalogues issued by certain of the Paris stores; some mail-order catalogues, mainly for textile products, are also available. The one which provides the

fullest coverage is probably that published by Manu-France. In this can be seen prices for products ranging from sports equipment to small wood-working machine tools. A copy of this catalogue, published annually, is held by Export Services Branch of the Board of Trade, where it may be examined.

The manufacturer of capital goods is not in the same happy position. Catalogues and price lists of such products are extremely difficult to obtain in France and many French manufacturers will not even supply them on an exchange basis. International trade fairs, though yielding a certain amount of literature, rarely provide easily accessible price lists which are increasingly kept under cover and given only to *bona fide* inquirers.

Two methods are open to such manufacturers and both really amount to a preliminary survey. The first is to make preliminary contact with an agent, work out prices with him and leave the rest to him. His relations with his clientele should be sufficiently close to enable him to obtain, if not competitors' prices, then at least a sure indication of whether those of the British firm stand a chance.

Secondly, if the manufacturer speaks French he can go himself or send a competent French speaker to visit French users. But the necessary preliminary arrangements must be made – the French are sticklers for that. Although French firms are not prepared to supply commercial information broadcast, they rarely refuse to see foreign representatives, and the visitor will usually find a willingness to examine and discuss prices.

The second method is probably the best, and if combined with the first, is more than likely to provide the required answers.

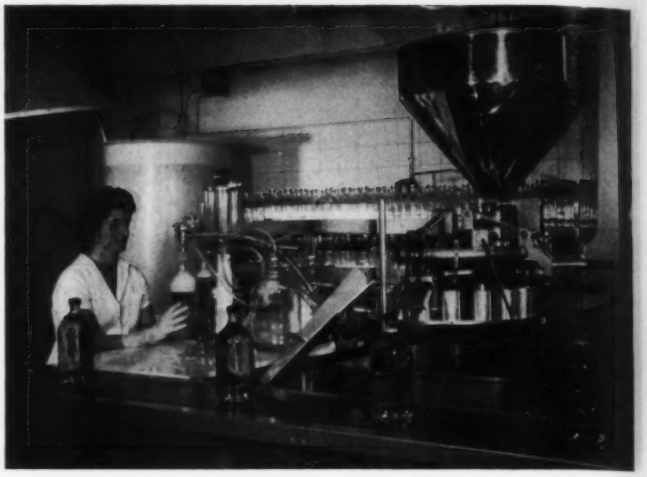
All this will, of course, cost time and money, and British exporters should be prepared to invest in both when investigating so sophisticated a market as France. For instance, when acting in a semi-appointed capacity the agent may request an indemnity whilst engaged in making a market survey.

Exporters should make every effort to quote prices – in francs – 'delivered destination', even though these are more trouble to calculate than f.o.b. or c.i.f. landed prices. Exporters in the Common Market countries, especially Germany, provide delivered prices, and if a British firm wishes to compete, it must give the same service.

In calculating delivered prices the most important addition is the customs duty, which for most goods is expressed as a percentage *ad valorem*, though for some items is at a specific rate per unit of quantity. The level of the tariff varies widely between products, but for the largest group of manufactures, viz. engineering goods, the commonest rates (for non-EEC countries) lie between 10 per cent and 15 per cent. Rates of 20 per cent and over are scattered throughout the tariff, however, particularly for motor vehicles, clothing, glassware, toys and manufactured foodstuffs. When the Common External Tariff of the EEC is fully adopted (by 1967 according to the Community's current plans) the majority of rates will lie in the 9 to 14 per cent band, though a substantial number will be in the 15 to 20 per cent bracket and some will exceed 20 per cent. By that time duties between the member states of the EEC will be entirely eliminated and our exports will be exposed to the full force of competition from France's Common Market partners. British exporters should therefore make every effort to secure a share of the French market now while the other member states are still paying a proportion (30 per cent) of the original high French national tariff.

Some French Customs Tariff Rates.

Commodity	Tariff Rates %	
	EEC Members	Non-EEC Countries
Turbines	6·6	14·8
Pumps, motor pumps and turbo-pumps for liquids	Free—7·5	5·8—15·7
Air-conditioning machines	5·4	12·9
Lifting, handling and loading machinery and conveyors	Free—7·5	8—16·6
Textile weaving machines	4·5	11·2
Metal-working machine tools	Free—6·6	5·2—13·6
Office machinery	2·7—7·5	9—17·6
Synthetic organic dyestuffs	Free—9	4·4—21·6
Outer garments	6—7·5	20
Dolls	7·5—12	20—26
Laboratory, hygienic and pharmaceutical glassware	6, 7·5	17·6—20·8
Biscuits and cakes	5·4—10·5	25·2—35



Processing and packaging unit of Laboratories Avlon at Enghion-les-Bains, near Paris. It is through this factory that the Pharmaceutical Division of ICI operates in France.

The customs duty is levied on the c.i.f. landed value of the goods, 'value' being defined as the price they would normally fetch in free competition in the open market at the time of their arrival at a French port and excluding duty and taxes which would normally be payable. This price is usually the invoice price, but the French Customs may place their own valuation on goods whose invoice price is not considered to reflect their true value. Transactions between exporters and importers who are linked financially are examined particularly carefully. If, for instance, a British principal invoices components to its French subsidiary at cost, without the addition of any profit margin, the French Customs are likely to adopt their own valuation for duty purposes.

Besides the duty, something like 15 taxes and other charges also have to be taken into consideration. The first and most onerous is the added value tax (taxe sur la valeur ajoutée or TVA) which for the sake of convenience, is calculated at 25 per cent* of the duty-paid value. This tax need cause no particular dismay since it approximates to purchase tax in Britain and French manufacturers pay it, which means that British firms are not placed at a disadvantage.

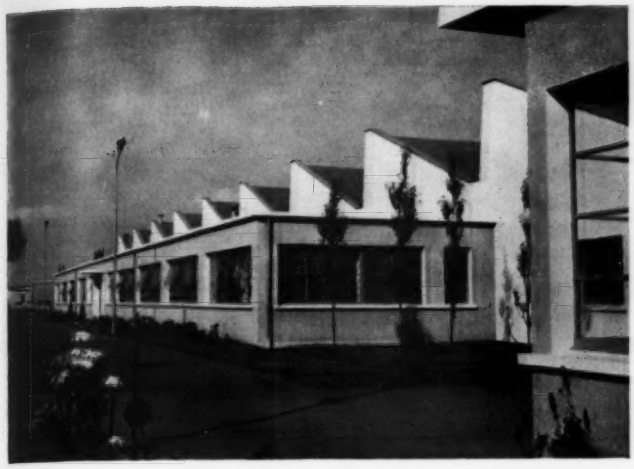
The smaller charges fall into four main groups:

A. Customs charges under sub-headings (a), (b), (c) below, and where applicable (i).
B. Customs brokers' charges grouping (d), (e), (f), (g) and (h).
C. Transport and miscellaneous charges.
D. Other administrative charges involving examination by officers of a particular Service, for example, sanitary inspection of vegetables.

Details are as follows:

(a) Stamp Tax (Droit de Timbre) levied at 2 per cent of the duty payable.
(b) Customs Handling Tax (Redevance) levied at 0.2 per cent of the c.i.f. value.
(c) Remittance Tax (Remise). Tax payable on all the operations necessary for the payment of duty and Added Value Tax and levied at 0.1 per cent of the total of the duty paid, the Stamp Tax and the Handling Tax.
(d) Customs Brokers' Fees (Honoraires d' Agréés en Douane). These are officially established and comprise a standard scale of charges based on the addition of the c.i.f. value and the amount of duty paid, multiplied by a co-efficient which

* 25 per cent is the rate generally applied, but a few goods are subject to other rates.



Usine Roto-Diesel, which manufactures distribution type fuel injection pumps and injectors is a joint venture of the Lucas group and a French group. Components are imported from Britain.

varies according to the nature of the goods handled. Though apparently complex, the scale of charges can be easily checked if necessary.

(e) Tax for Taking possession of Goods (Crédit d'Enlèvement). This amounts to further commission to the customs broker for payments he has made to allow him to take possession of the goods. It is levied at 0.25 per cent of the total of duty paid up to a ceiling of Frs. 10,000, and thereafter at 0.1 per cent of the remaining sum.

(f) Commission on Sums Paid Out (Avance de Fonds). Yet another commission to the broker for the total of sums paid out on behalf of his client to the Customs, charged at the rate of 1 per cent of the sums paid by him to the latter.

(g) Customs Checking (Vérification de Douane). This is a tax based on the time occupied in checking documents with the customs.

(h) Tax on Services Performed (Taxe T.P.S.). This is a tax due in principle on transactions other than sales, that is, as its name implies, on services. It is levied at the rate of 9.29 per cent on the total of sums paid to the customs broker for services rendered.

(i) Port Toll (Péages). This toll is only levied by autonomous ports and is normally based on weight.

(j) Stamp for Bill of Lading (Timbre de Connaissement). This is a fixed charge.

(k) Tax for Taking Goods in Charge (Taxe de Gestion). This taxed is only levied by autonomous ports and is based on weight.

Other charges e.g. (l) Unloading (Débarquement), (m) Checking (Pointage), (n) Storage (Stationnement), (o) Loading by Crane (Chargement Sur Wagon Avec Location de Grue and Manutention, Camionnage, Livraison), (p) Fixing for Despatch (Calage, Brêlage Sur Wagon Avec Fournitures), are all based on weight and are payable to the port authorities. The Transit Commission Charge (q) (Commission de Transit) is a commission payable for all unloading and re-loading operations involved.

Two sample calculations of delivered prices are shown alongside this article. One, for ladies' garments sent by air, is relatively simple. Duty was charged at 21 per cent and the rate of exchange at that particular date was Frs. 14 to the pound. The goods were discharged at Orly Airport and collected by the customer. The other, for steel constructional supports, shows every tax and charge involved between their unloading at Rouen and delivery to the customer. The rate of duty was 13.8 per cent and the rate of exchange on that occasion Frs. 13.68475 to the pound.

Information on rates of duty applicable to imports from Britain into France may be obtained from Tariff Section of Export Services Branch of the Board of Trade.

Sample calculations of delivered prices

Merchandise – Steel Constructional Supports. Weight 18,340 Kilos. Value c.i.f. Rouen £2,072. Frs. 28,354.80

	Frs.	Frs.	
FRAIS EN FRANCE:			
Droits de douane (13·8%)	3,912·96		
Droit de timbre (a)	78·25		
Redevance de 0·2% (b)	56·70		
Péages (i)	5·89		
Remise de 0·1% (c)	4·05		
Sommes acquittées à la douane.	4,057·85	4,057·85	
Honoraires d'Agréés en douane 32,264·57 × 0·45% + 57·60 (d)	202·79		
Crédit d'enlèvement et avance de fonds (e) and (f)	20·26		
Vérification en douane (g)	18·65		
Menus frais et téléphone	7·50		
TaxesTPS 249·20 × 9·29% (h)	23·15		
	272·35	272·35	
Débarquement (l)	254·38		
Timbre de connaissement (j)	26·00		
Pointage (m)	15·59		
Taxe de gestion (k)	7·89		
Stationnement (n)	11·00		
Chargement sur wagon avec location de grue (o)	291·42		
Calage, brêlage sur wagon avec fournitures (p)	195·67		
Commission de transit (q)	55·00		
	856·95	856·95	
		5,187·15	
Transport du port à Usine Client		359·80	5,546·95
			33,901·75

TAXE TVA	Frs.		
sur montant c.i.f.	28,354·80		
sur droits de douane	3,912·57		
soit 25% sur	32,267·76		8,066·94
PRIX FRANCO USINE CLIENT			41,968·69

Merchandise – Ladies' Garments. Weight 250 Kilos. Value c.i.f. £1,000 Frs. 14,000·00

	Frs..	Frs.	
FRAIS EN FRANCE:			
Droits de douane 14,000 × 21%	2,940·00		
Droit de timbre (a) 2,940 × 2%	58·80		
TVA 16,940 × 26%	4,404·40		
Redevance de 0·2% (b)	28·00		
Remise de 0·1% (c)	7·43		
Sommes acquittées à la douane	7,438·63	7,438·63	
Honoraires d'Agréés en douane (d) (bar, 9) 16,940 × 0·75% + 96·00	223·05		
Crédit d'enlèvement (e)	18·59		
Avance de fonds (f)	74·38		
Vérification en douane (g)	7·50		
	323·52	323·52	
		7,762·15	
Débarquement en transit (1) à Orly	15·00		
Manutention, camionnage, livraison (o)	14·50		
Commission de transit (q)	10·00		
Correspondance et menus frais	5·00		
	44·50	44·50	
TPS (h)		22·34	
			7,828·99
PRIX TOTAL			21,828·99

Explanations of the above taxes and charges are given in the accompanying text.

Left: The port of Villefranche-sur-Mer in the Alpes Maritimes.

Right: The world-famous Château du Clos Vougeot in Burgundy

France is not only Paris!

Trading opportunities in the provinces

PARIS IS CERTAINLY the commercial capital of France. A very high proportion of the distribution trades is concentrated there, including most of the import business. But the concentration of business of all kinds, as well as the administration, in the capital has led to serious congestion and, in the hope at least of preventing it from growing any worse, the policy is now to decentralize. The French government has taken measures to encourage new industries to establish themselves in certain parts of the country where there is less than full employment and it would welcome the decentralization of other activities.

France is a much larger country than Britain and agents in Paris are not always fully equipped to cover the whole country. Though many of them work through a network of sub-agents, this is not always a satisfactory means of distributing a product over the whole of France. An alternative possibility is to divide the country up among a number of agents. A British exporter of motor cars has recently adopted this line, entrusting distribution to different companies established in four or five separate areas.

The official Commercial Service has long had a network of Consulates in France capable of answering commercial inquiries, but in the last year or two the Consulates have been reinforced by Commercial Officers. As the Commercial Officers of the Embassy have, like the Consulate Commercial Officers, been doing a good deal of travelling it has been possible to form an opinion of the prospects for British goods outside Paris.

The official Service divides France into the following districts.

District	Principal features
Paris. 26 Departments. Population 19 million.	Includes a vast area to the north and west. The largest concentration and the largest variety of industries: agriculture, engineering, (heavy and light) electro-metallurgy and electro-chemistry, household electrical appliances, chemicals and petro-chemicals, nuclear power, aircraft, prepared foodstuffs, furniture, glassware, jewellery, motor vehicles, perfumes, paper and cardboard, plastics, tyres and ship-building (in the West), tourism and entertainment.
Bordeaux. 20 Departments. Population 6½ million.	Predominantly rural. Agriculture featuring wine growing. Poorer in raw materials and less industrialized. Far from large concentrations of population and from the rest of the Common Market. Industries: natural gas, petro-chemicals, aircraft, paper and plywood.
Lille. 5 Departments. Population 5 million.	Agriculture, especially sugar and cereals. Fishing. Transport is important. Coal-mining, building, steel, chemicals, dyes, fertilizers, textiles, clothing, carpets, glass and cement are the main industries.
Lyons. 15 Departments. Population 6 million.	The area is growing fast. Industry increasing. Silk and man-made fibres, heavy engineering, chemicals, electrical machinery, wine-growing are the main industries. Also important for coal-mining, hydro-electric power and building. Situated on the natural line of communication between Germany and the Mediterranean.
Marseilles. 13 Departments. Population 5 million.	23 per cent of the population is in industry. Large port not fully employed through the loss of the trade with Africa and Asia. Agriculture important. Specialities: wine, flowers and vegetables. Industries: hydro-electric power and oil refining. Tourism is important.
Strasbourg. 11 Departments. Population 4½ million.	Diversified agriculture. The industries are iron ore, coal, steel, potash, timber, textiles, engineering, oil refining and a number of small, light industries.

The provinces of France show certain general characteristics. The first is growing industralization, generally concentrated in or near existing towns, which draws labour from the land. The rise in purchasing power in most of these areas is marked. There is a demand for modern living even in rural areas, a movement of taste towards modern goods and a rapidly rising demand for articles which used to be considered non-essentials. Super-marketing is in its early days.

Generally speaking, in the provinces there are strong feelings of goodwill towards Britain based on wartime comradeship, on historical or business connections, or on tourism.

The main differences between the provinces and Paris are also worth noticing. In general, taste is less sophisticated and still has to be educated to buy the newest goods. But it cannot be assumed that old-fashioned merchandise can be sold in the provinces. There is indeed still a demand for traditional supplies, but the very newest in transistor radios can be sold in a small market town, and whisky, the new 'apéritif', appears at every provincial Fair. The rural population is no longer isolated. Cars, good local bus services and excellent main line rail services have seen to this. Television has not yet achieved the density of coverage obtained in the United Kingdom, but it is sufficiently wide-spread to have a marked influence on provincial taste and demand. The population also acquires a knowledge of new goods through small town Fairs. A characteristic feature of these Fairs is always the open-air display of tractors and agricultural machinery, and the stalls demonstrating kitchen appliances and do-it-yourself tools.

In the shops of a provincial town it is hard to find British goods. This is not because it is difficult to penetrate the provincial distributive systems with imported goods; Japanese electronics, German household appliances and Italian textiles are easily found, but not the British counterparts. Ask a local shop-keeper why he does not offer British goods as well and the answer will usually be that nobody has offered him any.

Certainly there is tariff discrimination in favour of the goods of the other member countries of the Common Market, but this does not prevent us from selling the French £200 million worth of goods per annum. It should not prevent us from infiltrating the provincial markets as well as Paris.

By the time that imported goods reach a small town shop the distributor's mark-up is certainly considerable, in some cases as

Palais des Congrès and Exhibition buildings of Lyons International Fair.

much as 150 per cent. There are so many middlemen on the way. To some extent this obstacle can be overcome by dealing direct with an agent covering only a part of France and arranging importation direct from Britain to his customers. Some goods can be sold direct to buying organizations located in the provinces; heavy and expensive items of equipment are always sold direct and there is no reason why the agency arrangements should be more expensive than if the customer were in Paris.

British goods produced to French friends living away from Paris can be an agreeable surprise on account of their novelty, their quality and their price. British exporters who are told by their agents that the whole country is being covered, but who see that they do not get many orders from the provinces, should try the experiment of making a trip, with the agent if he will travel, to some of the bigger provincial centres. One of HM Consuls reported recently: 'I have had to deal with many more British business visitors in remote posts in Africa than here!'

A considerable effort will be required to improve this state of affairs. What is to be done will depend largely on the nature of the goods. The first thing is to ensure that the exporter really has adequate coverage of the market through his agent or agents. The Embassy and Consulates can sometimes give advice on this. The personal approach, an offer to travel with your agent's salesman for a week or so in the more distant parts of the country, should constitute a rapid and effective check.

Small exporters new to the French market could consider starting up with an agent in a provincial area and with a limited territory.

In dealing with provincial agents it is particularly important to ensure that they will give adequate service. They are not necessarily so well equipped to do so as their *confrères* in Paris.

It goes without saying that a provincial agent, even more than a Parisian one, will need to receive information from his principals in French, all of it.

The exporter must ascertain from his agent which of his products will best suit the local market. Frequent personal contact with the agent is the surest way of keeping in touch with the vagaries of taste and demand.

It does not take long to visit a provincial agent. There are daily air services from Orly (Paris) to the main French provincial towns. The main line train services are comfortable and phenomenally fast. Though France has not built many kilometres of motorways, her main roads are good and it is possible, in a fairly hard day's driving, to get from Paris to Bordeaux or Strasbourg and in less than that to Lille, Nantes and Lyons.

British exporters who wish to explore the provincial markets will receive a warm welcome in the Commercial Sections of HM Consulates in Bordeaux, Lille, Lyons, Marseilles and Strasbourg. They can put the exporter into touch with agents, buyers, advertising and market consultants and trade organizations. No British business traveller will overlook the pleasurable attractions of a trip to the French provinces. But do not try to combine a holiday with the business trip; the French go on holiday too!

Birmingham Chamber of Commerce mission to Lyons

The market

IN RECENT YEARS many British exporters have taken a new look at the French market and have increased their sales there. Many of them, however, seem to have concentrated their efforts on Paris, paying insufficient attention to important provincial centres. The Birmingham Chamber of Commerce set out to pioneer sales to one of the most important of these provincial centres, and in November last organized a selling mission to Lyons.

There was already a link between Birmingham and Lyons. They are twin towns, and there has been an exchange of civic delegations for some years. But Lyons was selected because it is also capital of the Rhône-Alpes economic region – the fastest-growing region in France, with an annual growth rate of 8 per cent, which is 3 per cent higher than the planned rate of growth for the whole of France (1). There is a wide range of industry in the area and activity is high. This offers considerable opportunities for the sales of British industrial equipment – ranging from heavy capital goods to office machinery – while the general prosperity of the area provides a market for consumer goods (2).

The aims of the mission

The main aim was to secure more business for each firm taking part. The mission as a group was also intended to generate widespread publicity and so stimulate interest among French industrialists and buyers in British goods, services and equipment.

The mission provided an opportunity for established exporters to make a personal visit to the Lyons area to boost their company's sales and visit their local agent and customers. Exporters new to the Lyons area were also helped to break into the market, contact potential customers and agents and examine market conditions at first-hand.

How the mission was organized

This was essentially a working mission, and the programme and preparations were all geared to meeting the individual requirements of each member of the mission as closely as possible. This can only be done really effectively for a small number of people, and ten businessmen took part. The mission also included an official party: the leader, Mr. H. B. Jackson, Barclay's Export Finance Co. Ltd., and a member of the Europe Executive Committee of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce; Sir James Hutchison, representing the Export Council for Europe; Mr. Keith Gascoigne, Industrial Editor of the *Birmingham Post;* and a mission secretary from the

1 For further information about the economic situation in the region see 'Lyons, tomorrow's metropolis, today's market' – *Board of Trade Journal*, October 18, 1963.

2 For information on the market opportunities for consumer goods see report on 'Opportunities for British Consumer and Consumer Durable Products in France (Rhône-Alpes Region)', obtainable from the Export Council for Europe, 21 Tothill Street, London, S.W.1, price 5s. post free.

Birmingham Chamber of Commerce.

Although group commitments and social functions were kept to a minimum and held as far as possible outside business hours, some functions like this are inevitable and indeed useful in a mission's programme. The official members were able to represent the mission at official meetings and functions and allow their colleagues to concentrate on their business programmes where preferable. Valuable contacts were established with such organizations as the Lyons Chamber of Commerce, the Société Economique Politique of the Rhône-Alpes Region, the regional Comité pour l'Aménagement et l'Expansion Economique, the Lyons International Fair authorities, local banking and financial interests and the civic authorities.

During the five working days of the mission's stay, the business members carried out programmes of appointments chiefly in Lyons, but with some visits to other nearby centres such as St. Etienne, Grenoble and Annecy. These programmes had been arranged in advance by the Commercial Section of the British Consulate-General in Lyons in collaboration with the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce. The mission secretary in Birmingham had been in touch with all members of the mission, meeting members of the companies involved and visiting factories, to get a precise idea of their operations, interests and aims in joining the mission – together with an indication of the types of contacts they wished to make and the industries concerned. This information had been passed to the Consulate-General, who prepared lists of potential contacts, and after further consultation a draft programme for each member of the mission. Where possible this was prepared in conjunction with a company's French agent.

In most cases members of the mission allowed time in their programmes for follow-up work, and found that during their stay further contacts were suggested by the people they met for appointments, others met at group functions and by other members of the mission as their own programmes developed.

The results

The mission created a great deal of interest. The visit was very well publicised in the principal newspapers of the area, and the leader was interviewed for French radio. This contributed greatly to the warm reception enjoyed by the mission as a whole and by the individual members in their business appointments. Everyone seemed glad to see British businessmen in the area, and most of them wanted to see and learn more about British goods.

It is estimated that £35,000 of business resulted from the mission's visit, but it is difficult to get an accurate figure. Several members of the mission are still negotiating business with contacts they made during their visits, and others, manufacturing industrial equipment, considered their visits part of a longer-term selling operation. One mission member appointed an agent in Lyons and another expected to complete negotiations with one of the four companies very interested in an agency for his products. A representative from one French company was so interested in the equipment manufactured by one of the firms taking part that he visited Birmingham to discuss a special project only a few days after the mission returned.

One of the most valuable functions of the mission was to speed up the process of contacting potential customers and agents, enabling the members to do more in five days than they probably could have done on an individual visit. It also helped them to gain access to more senior executives in French companies than when travelling alone. Representatives of companies with established export interests in France and of companies approaching the market for the first time both derived a great deal of benefit in making new contacts like this. One member said: 'One contact I made may prove to be our best in France,' and another: 'Having visited the Continent several times on my own, I have no hesitation in saying that a group mission such as this is quite the best way of prospecting for business in a strange area.' One member was glad to have this opportunity to meet a number of established customers whom he had not previously seen on their home ground.

Trade problems

The visit brought into focus some of the problems which may be hindering foreign trade in provincial France. For example, there seems to be an obvious need to develop direct transport links and provide transport facilities between the Channel ports and such centres as Lyons. It is essential to avoid Paris where lengthy delays can occur, increasing freight costs considerably. British companies exporting to the Lyons area could usefully explore more thoroughly the possibilities of air freight and of direct road transport between the Channel ports and Lyons.

A reception was given to members of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce mission by a Lyons newspaper. From left to right: M. Emile Bremond, 'Le Progrès'; Mr. H. B. Jackson, leader of the Mission; Mr. I. W. Bell, HM Consul-General.

The visit undoubtedly resulted in a better understanding of the British viewpoint, which will help other exporters to do business in France.

Conclusion

The members of the mission were very warmly received and kept very busy. Almost all of them were optimistic about the business which would result from their visit, and several plan return visits to the area. Having observed one of the exporter's first laws, 'Go and visit the market,' the members of this mission found that a good potential market did exist and that their visit had been worthwhile.

The regional market in France

Articles on the market for British exports in the regions of France were published in the *Board of Trade Journal*, as follows: South-east, October 4, 1963; Lyons, October 18, 1963; North-east, November 8, 1963; South-west, December 20, 1963; North, February 2, 1964; Paris, March 13, 1964. Copies may be obtained from Export Services Branch or from Commercial Relations and Exports Department of the Board of Trade.

The British Chamber of Commerce, France

THE British Chamber of Commerce, France, with headquarters at 6 rue Halévy, Paris 1er (just by the Opera), has Regional Councils at Marseilles, Bordeaux and Lille, and representatives in several other towns. The Chamber works in close contact with the Embassy in Paris and the Consulates. The Directors, men long accustomed to trading in France, willingly put their experience at the disposal of members and the Chamber offers a comprehensive service. It also serves non-members on a fee-paying basis. It is the representative in France of the Federation of British Industries. It publishes a monthly journal entitled *Cross Channel Trade*, which contains useful information for its British members about the French market and organizes various functions throughout the year to enable members to meet one another or to hear leading figures in industry and commerce express their views on Anglo-French trade.

How to find—and keep—the right French agent

M. Jean Lefebvre (left) President and Director-General of the Jean Lefebvre Group, manufacturers of RESMAT in France, receives the 'Prestige de la France' diploma from M. Marc Jacquet, Minister of Public Works and Transport. In the centre is M. Raymond Rodel, President of the Committee of Prestige de la France.

IT IS NOT DIFFICULT to find an agent in France, but it is another matter to find one who possesses all the necessary qualifications for the stern task of selling British goods.

The first decision that faces the British exporter is whether he wishes to employ his agent on a purchasing or commission basis. The purchasing basis is the more usual with well-established importing houses, particularly those who deal in products such as machinery. They often require exclusive rights and some assistance with credit, and they fix their own selling prices. The commission system is more usual with the individual agent working on his own or with a small staff, and is better adapted to the textile and certain consumer goods trades, It goes without saying that no agent should be appointed before his background and financial position are fully known and a guarantee is given that any other firms he represents or may represent in the future are, or will be, in no way competitors of the British firm in question.

Regional representation

Most British exporters will prefer to have an agent located in Paris, though some may prefer to begin in a small way by covering some part of France from a provincial town. In any case, it is important to examine the coverage given by an agent. Many will cheerfully claim to cover the whole of France and perhaps never move more than 100 miles from Paris. Others who are honest will indicate the exact area visited. In both cases a British manufacturer will have to tackle seriously the problem of regional representation. In this respect the Commercial Department of the British Embassy, Paris, and the consular posts in the provinces are competent to give assistance. On the other hand, there are a good many firms – and even individuals—whose claim to cover the whole country is valid.

Good agents are eagerly sought after. Tempting offers come from all corners of the world, from Japan and the United States to Scandinavia, and notably from the Common Market countries. British manufacturers must face the fact that there is competition for efficient agents and representatives just as there often is for labour. Consequently, exporters must expect to provide their agents – especially a commission agent, who is an individual – with a proper remuneration and the greatest possible service, or rival exporters will snap them up.

This question of remuneration is an important one. Owing to the fierce competition in France, it is becoming increasingly customary to pay a monthly indemnity to an agent whilst he is endeavouring to introduce a product to the French market. This may, in some cases, take a couple of years, and meanwhile the agent must live and must meet the expenses involved. British firms have sometimes lost the services of active agents because they would not recognize this need.

A good agent deserves a good principal. How, then, should a good principal act? His most important task is to maintain regular contact with his agent: failure to do so can discourage the agent and create in his mind the impression that his principal is neither very much interested in him nor in exporting to France. Selling cannot be done by remote control and visits are essential both to see the agent and also to get to know one's French customers so that they realize that their British suppliers are interested in them too. This is elementary, but at the same time sound business. Another essential is to attend promptly to correspondence. More and more agents expect to correspond by Telex.

There are a number of channels through which agents may be recruited. The most obvious is by application to Export Services Branch of the Board of Trade, who maintain a list of possible agents and importers, and who, in cases where these do not suffice, can ask the Commercial Department of the British Embassy, who are in daily contact with agents of all kinds, to make direct inquiries. Another valuable source in France is the British Chamber of Commerce. French trade journals, in which advertisements may be placed, and Representatives' Trade Associations may also be used. These can be extremely useful to British firms who wish to appoint regional agents.

A large number of agents and representatives are individuals who belong to recognized trade unions by whom their status is – sometimes not too clearly – defined. In view of this it is advisable for British firms before making any agreement with an agent or representative to consult a lawyer who has a knowledge of both British and French commercial law. There are a number of such lawyers of British nationality practising in Paris.

Terminating an agency

It is difficult in France to terminate an agency on grounds of incompetence or lack of success even in the case of an independent agent who is not a member of a French union. In the event of any appeal to the French courts, the rights of such an agent will almost certainly be considered identical with those of his colleagues who belong to a union. On the other hand, a number of representatives of British manufacturers have been operating for years without any written agreement whatsoever and in perfect harmony with their British principals. Most of these are well-established firms and not individuals and hence, perhaps, the good relations. Nevertheless, any British manufacturer willing to operate thus should make very certain of the firms in question.

The individual acting as an independent agent without some form of indemnity against expenses is tending to become increasingly rare simply because he cannot afford to work under such conditions, and the choice therefore is beginning to be narrowed down to firms or members of the representatives' unions.

A paper entitled 'Representation in France', prepared by the British Embassy, describes more fully the types of agency available and the legal rights of French agents, and lists the addresses of British lawyers in Paris. This memorandum is available from Export Services Branch and from Commercial Relations and Exports Department of the Board of Trade.

Retail distribution

Part of the frontage of the Burton tailoring store on the Bvd. Poissonnière, in Paris, opened by Sir Pierson Dixon, formerly HM Ambassador in Paris, last September.

THE FRENCH RECOGNIZE that their retail distribution system needs modernization. They are conscious that their retail establishments are too many and too small. Concentration is essential. New methods of distribution are growing in strength, but slowly. The total number of retail establishments in France has been falling very slowly, if at all, in the last few years; the growth in the population and the influx from Algeria have tended to maintain an acceptable volume of business for even the small individual shopkeepers. Moreover, they stay open till all hours.

Chains of big stores, supermarkets and central buying organizations are the growth points in the retail distribution system. These new organizations, anxious to reduce their overheads to a minimum and able to place large orders, tend to go direct to manufacturers and try to dispense with intermediaries, even agents.

Wholesalers

There are said to be over 100,000 wholesalers employing on the average four persons. More than half deal in food. The wholesalers are losing ground to the buying groups which perform similar functions for a tied clientele. Fusions are arranged so the larger units can utilize modern equipment and remain competitive. There are also some important groups of wholesalers, more or less closely linked in their purchasing arrangements. Some of these have joined international groups. Some are linked with large voluntary groupings of retailers. There are wholesalers who work on a 'cash and carry' system, described as self-service at wholesale.

Retail establishments

There are said to be three-quarters of a million retail shops in France. More than 90 per cent of them are tiny, at least half have no employees and only about 6 per cent employ more than six persons. Independent shops still have about 80 per cent of the turnover. The statistics relating to the organization of the retail trade bring out that the sectors which are making the most rapid progress are those concerned with home furnishings and equipment and leisure goods. The types of shop which have enjoyed the most rapid growth in turnover are the booksellers, the big department stores, multiple food shops, furniture shops and ironmongers.

Department stores

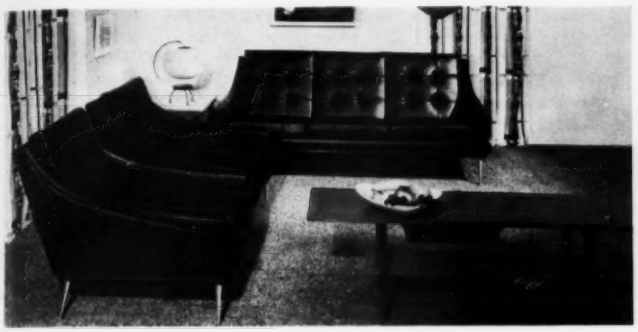
The department stores, selling goods of many kinds, though generally with some concentration on a particular branch such as clothing, household equipment or furnishings, are a growing branch of the retail trade. New department stores tend to be opened in the suburban shopping areas of the larger towns and in the smaller towns which are showing the greatest growth. These stores rely on centralized buying and are generally linked together in chains, although this is not always apparent from their names.

Popular chains

France has important chains of popular stores with several hundred outlets spread over the country. Their share of total retail turnover, though small, is rapidly growing. These shops rely mainly on the rapid turnover of cheap, often packaged wares. There is some variety in the range of goods stocked by the different chains. They purchase mainly through central buying agencies in Paris.

Central buying organizations

There are several central buying organizations which buy for a large number of shops. Some of these work with department stores, some with popular chains, some with both. In some cases the shops are owned by the same controlling company; in others the buying agency acts on behalf of independent retailers. The system is, in any case, the same. The buying agency stocks up with seasonal goods at the appropriate time of the year and the buyers come from the shops to examine a wide range of samples in every branch covered by the buying centre and place their orders through it. There are



Above (top): At the 'Longchamp' bar on the Avenue Champs-Elysées in Paris, Johnnie Walker whisky is a great favourite.
Above (lower): This lounge suite, made by Stonehill Furniture Ltd., London, N.18, has proved very popular in France.
Right (top): National Shearwater catamaran, one of several sold by G. Prout and Sons Ltd., of Canvey Island, to France. They have also sold nearly six hundred folding yacht tenders.

Right (lower): John Craig mercerized elasticated cotton jumper exhibited at the recent Prêt-à-Porter Féminin and now being sold with great success in France.

said to be 300 of these central buying agencies, but a very large proportion of them are in the food trade. A list of the main buying centres with the largest turnover in goods other than food is printed on page 40.

Supermarkets

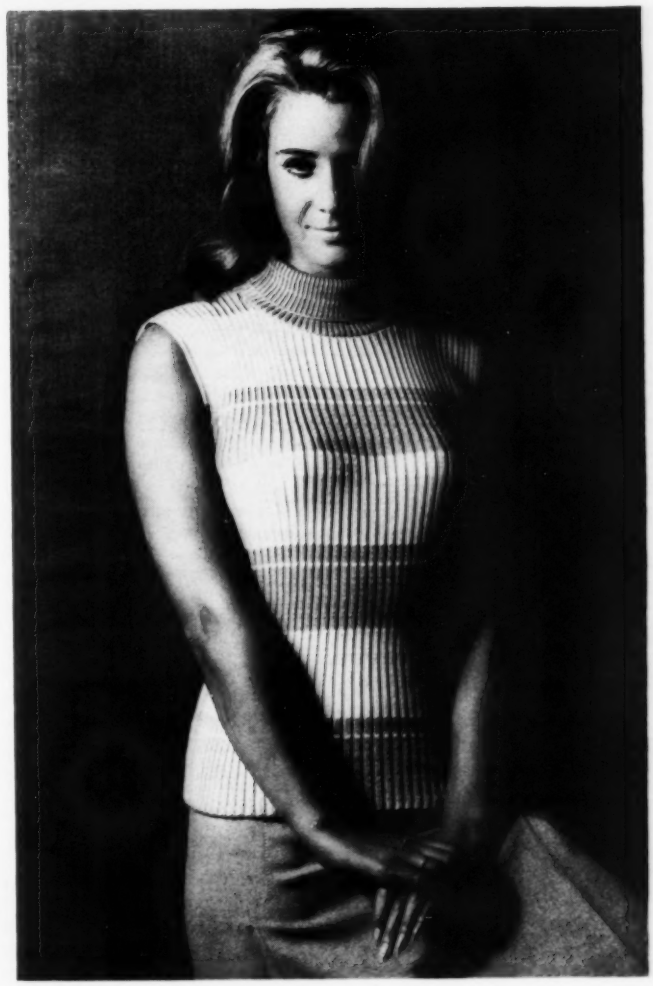
The French are turning towards new retail selling methods with some reluctance. The tradition of a personal relationship between the customer and the shop-keeper dies very hard. Nevertheless self-service, the promotion of sales by visual techniques and the invasion of the market by advertised, packaged goods which must be held by retailers are permitting self-service shops and the supermarkets to gain ground. There are about 400 supermarkets, and new ones are established at a rate of about 100 a year. Many of them are merely conversions of small establishments to self-service and the average area of the so-called supermarkets is only 7,000 square feet. But it is rising. The suburban supermarket with parking facilities is still not common. Supermarkets according to the French definition make 4 per cent of retail food sales and do a smaller proportion of the trade in other branches. Half the supermarkets are controlled by big combines.

Co-operatives

Consumer co-operatives have a declining proportion of the retail trade. Their share of the retail market is about 2½ per cent, mostly in food.

Mail order business

Mail order is important for many of the big stores which go in for substantial advertising campaigns. By this means they sell mainly textiles; books, gramophone records and timepieces are other branches in which important mail order business is done. France also has a few mail order houses which do no other business, but they make only 1 per cent of total sales. A list of these is



Aveling Barford tractor shovel and one of six 15-ton payload Dumptrucks in operation together for Magnésie et Dolomie de France in their Pas de Calais quarry.

held by the Export Services Branch of the Board of Trade.

The technique of direct sale by newspaper advertising is in its earliest beginnings.

How to sell

Although the traditional channels of trade, i.e., through agent to wholesaler, still carry the greatest volume of business (excepting clothing, where virtually no wholesale stage exists), the British exporter may find it easier and more profitable to introduce a new product through the well informed and enterprising central buying agencies. But they work to fine margins and to some extent they specialize. The exporter should inform himself of the often subtle characteristics in the quality and nature of the goods they handle. When in doubt, the information and advice of the Commercial Services of the Embassy and the Consulates are at the exporters' disposal.

Central Buying Groups

Name	Address	Departmental Store Links	Links with Chains
Groupement d'Achats des Grands Magasins Indépendants	89 rue d'Amsterdam, Paris 8e.	Various	
Sté. des Magasins Réunis.	60 rue de Turenne, Paris 3e.	Various	
Sté. des Nouvelles Galeries.	66 rue des Archives, Paris 3e.	Various	Magasins Modernes
Sté. Paris-France.	137 boulevard Voltaire, Paris 11e.	Various	
Sté. Parunis.	137 boulevard Voltaire, Paris 11e.		
Sté. Alsacienne de Magasins.	126 rue de Provence, Paris 8e.		
Sté. Parisienne d'Achats en Commun.	102 rue de Provence, Paris 9e.	Printemps, Louvre.	Prisunic, Galeries Parisiennes
Sté. Uniprix.	82 rue Beaubourg, Paris 3e.		Uniprix
Sté. Centrale d'Achats.	1 rue Paul Cézanne, Paris 8e.		Uniprix
Sté. Générale Achats du Bon Marché.	22, rue de Sèvres, Paris 7e.	Bon Marché.	Priminime

Department Stores in Paris

Bazar de l'Hôtel de Ville	55, rue de la Verrerie, Paris 4e.
Belle Jardinière	2, rue du Pont Neuf, Paris 1er.
Bon Marché	135, rue du Bac, Paris 7e.
Galeries Lafayette	40, boulevard Haussmann, Paris 9e.
Inno-France	15, rue des Bourdonnais, Paris 1er.
Louvre	Place du Palais Royal, Paris 1er.
Printemps	64, boulevard Haussmann, Paris 9e.
Samaritaine	67, rue de Rivoli, Paris 1er.
Samaritaine de Luxe	25, boulevard des Capucines, Paris 2e.
Trois Quartiers	21, boulevard de la Madeleine, Paris 1er.

How we broke into the French market

by Wright Rain Ltd., Ringwood, Hants

IN JUST THREE YEARS, Wright Rain Ltd., irrigation equipment manufacturers, of Ringwood, Hants, have developed an important market in France representing a high proportion of their world turnover.

In the winter of 1960/61 the company was ready to develop export markets, particularly those close at hand – in Western Europe for example. Previously, they were unable to launch a powerful sales effort in such countries because of staff and production limitations. But the success of home sales in 1959, because of the very dry summer, created expansion of production facilities and the seasons 1959/60 showed that irrigation was necessary and profitable to agriculture, even in the British climate. So why not elsewhere?

But *why France?* France obviously deserved investigation. It is larger than Britain, is predominantly agricultural, and has a favourable 'growing' climate in most regions, although generally deficient in rainfall in the summer months. The country was politically more stable than at any time since the war, and obviously on the brink of exciting economic development within the European Common Market.

Obviously all aspects of the market had to be investigated before a decision was made to go ahead with a serious campaign.

Initial studies were helped by the Board of Trade's Export Services Branch, who supplied information on customs duties, the French sales tax, etc.

The success of Wright Rain equipment is due to the company's interest in agriculture and appreciation of specific requirements of each market. Visits to Paris and desk studies would therefore have been of limited value. It was essential to visit and obtain first-hand knowledge of the market. To this end a representative with working knowledge of French and trained in agriculture, spent a month travelling in France by car to investigate:

the type and intensity of agriculture in all cultivated regions;
climatic details and need for irrigation in these regions;
the buying power and preferences of French farmers of all types;
the extent of Government aid to agriculture with particular reference to sponsored irrigation projects;
the extent of irrigation already in existence;
the nature and prices of competitors' equipment;
the pattern of distribution of agricultural equipment; and
applicable customs duties, taxes, import restrictions, etc.

As a result of this survey, it was decided that the French market was one ripe for development, but a very important feature became apparent. Because of the size of France, the intensity of its agriculture, the existence of clear geographical and agricultural regions, and the need for very competitive prices, it was necessary – and preferable – to work with several regional distributors rather than with central importers in Paris. Thereby one or two steps in the chain from manufacturer to user were eliminated and prices made competitive with those of other manufacturers.

Subsequently, in the 1961 season a trial run took place in conjunction with an agricultural machinery dealer in the South. Initial stock was imported and the difficult task of introducing a new name was tackled by:

local fairs and demonstrations;
visits to Government departments (Ministry of Agriculture);
sales to local influential farmers and growers; and
on the spot assistance by Wright Rain staff.

Despite the late start – inevitable when trying to transport goods and clear customs for the first time in a new territory – several installations were sold and invaluable experience and knowledge were gained of France and French farmers; the peculiarities of French business practice and officialdom, and of the competition facing Wright Rain.

As a result of this experience, it was decided in 1961-62 to establish a network of distributors in regions where equipment was being sold already, or where it was considered to have immediate potential. Wright Rain has been most successful in areas where it started selling before, or at the same time as, its competitors, rather than trying to cut into areas which were already fully exploited.

Another 'Tour de France' was made, seeking distributors in promising areas. Most of the present distributors were originally contacted during this tour. Features looked for in potential distributors were:

contact with agriculture, preferably already selling to farmers in one or two departments, and selling first-class lines;
their ability to import and hold a stock of equipment;
their willingness to have salesmen/technicians trained to sell irrigation;
a good local reputation with farmers and Government projects officials.

Conspicuous by its absence is their ability to correspond in English. Never has this been required of a distributor, and the choice has therefore been much wider.

Wright Rain acquired a full time interpreter in addition to a French speaking sales engineer, and have now built up a team of French technical salesmen who visit the distributors.

In March 1962 the company exhibited at the Salon International de la Machine Agricole in Paris and then undertook a six weeks' demonstration tour in collaboration with newly-appointed distributors. In the summer of 1962 useful 'pilot' sales were made in Normandy, the Loire Valley and the South.

In November 1962 the first complete French training course was held at the Wright Rain factory for 10 distributors' salesmen, and the 1963 season saw the extension of the distributor network, especially in the North. This development continued in 1964 and in 1965 up to 20 distributors of various categories will cover most of France. The training course has become an annual event and distributors frequently bring customers to the Wright Rain factory to see how the equipment is made and tested.

So, within a short period of just over three years, Wright Rain have developed a market in France which now represents a considerable proportion of their world turnover and in so doing have obviously drawn valuable conclusions on how to break into and develop such a market. These conclusions could be summarized as follows:

1. Study the market carefully – don't just visit the capital and rely on reports from other people who are not conversant with your particular product. Learn the language, visit the market, discuss requirements with potential customers. Study your competitors but do not be afraid of their apparent domination – they may be complacent and you could take them by surprise. Wright Rain have at least 10 competitors in France but have not let this discourage them.
2. Determine a distribution plan and seriously consider the advantages of regional representation, supplied direct from your factory. A Paris importing house is not always essential and can be an expensive bottleneck.
3. Concentrate your initial efforts into an area most likely to develop rapidly so that you can start on level pegging with your competitors. It will be tough but this is better than going to an area where potential has been exhausted to a lesser or greater extent.
4. Work closely with the distributors and visit them frequently. Give them all possible technical assistance. A difficult customer is often easily calmed by a visit from a specialist direct from the factory, particularly an overseas one.

Finance for export

by R. Ewart Williams, Member of the FBI Export Credits Committee and a Director of The Credit Insurance Association Ltd.

THE BRITISH EXPORTER wanting to finance his exports to France has a wide range of facilities from which to choose. He has also the advantage of dealing with a sophisticated market with the benefit of a banking system which is broadly similar to our own, and the creditworthiness of French firms engaged in import trade is usually high. The choice of financing service will depend upon the particular requirements of the British exporter and his French customer, but neither will have reason to complain that the available systems lack flexibility.

Some measure of trade credit will be necessary in most cases. This may take the form of monthly account or 90 or 120 days' credit, according to the custom of the trade, and one reliable estimate is that fully 90 per cent of all trade credit in sales to France comes within these categories.

Where capital goods are sold, there is some trend towards the buyer asking for extended terms. In cases where there is a long manufacturing period it is not uncommon for the buyer to make progress payments, but an increasing number of buyers is asking for two or three years' credit. The reason for this is that suppliers in the Common Market countries have been offering such terms, and the buyers expect similarly favourable terms from other would-be suppliers. There is little or no evidence, however, of French firms wanting five years' credit or longer, terms which may be necessary in some of the less developed markets.

The greater part of export financing is in the hands of the clearing banks, and the average exporting firm selling to France or other countries in Western Europe has little reason to make special arrangements for these credit sales. They can be treated almost as if they were home sales and it will be found that most clearing banks will look at them in this light, especially where the firm is insuring its exports with the Export Credits Guarantee Department or the private credit insurance market.

One recent development in export financing, announced by the President of the Board of Trade, is designed to facilitate export sales on extended credit terms. Where the value of the contract is £50,000 and the period of credit is not less than three years, ECGD are prepared in principle to give a special guarantee to a financing bank guaranteeing repayment unconditionally if for any reason an insured debt is not paid by the buyer. The clearing banks, by arrangement with the Bank of England, have undertaken to finance such guaranteed transactions at a special fixed rate of 5½ per cent per annum.

As has been indicated earlier, French and other West European importers have shown little interest in taking exceptional periods of credit from British exporters. However, attitudes are changing as a result of credit competition inside the Common Market and it remains to be seen whether a greater demand for British credit will be generated by these more favourable financing terms. Much will depend upon local availability of money and borrowing costs, and one would expect these facilities to be in demand whenever local financing in Western Europe becomes either expensive or difficult.

Many British firms, when selling on a large scale in France or anxious to develop their French sales, have found advantages in making use of the specialized services of the French banks operating in Britain. In such a sophisticated market it is particularly important that financing costs should be competitive and, because of the structure of French banking, there are occasions where these banks show cost benefits. Where they are able to provide import finance in

France rather than export finance in Britain, there is of course an immediate contribution to our balance of payments position.

The French banks will help in the choice of agents or finding new outlets for British goods; this can be particularly useful in the area outside the range of a Paris agent, but it is only fair to point out that such services can be obtained also through the British banks.

Although normal banking facilities are used for most of the exports on credit to Common Market countries, there are special facilities for those sales which do not fall into the standard pattern. Most of these facilities are provided by companies which are controlled by merchant banks and leading merchanting houses. These services tend to be rather more expensive either because they involve more risk or work, or both, for the finance house. Thus the cost of such operations cannot be fairly compared with normal banking charges because they offer a somewhat different service.

One interesting development has been the use of factoring in the export trade. Although one of its services is to provide finance during the credit period, this is not the main purpose of factoring. The basic object is to provide a specialist organization which takes away from the exporter all the work involved in credit control, sales accounting and collection. By using modern mechanized accounting systems on a large scale, the factor claims to be able to operate these services rather more efficiently and cheaply than the average small exporter, thus freeing him to concentrate upon producing and selling his goods. The only difference that it makes to the customer is that he makes payment to the factor and not directly to the exporter. An important consideration is that, by undertaking to factor the goods, the factor assumes responsibility for any credit risk in the transaction.

The exporter can elect to be paid for his goods when payment falls due or he can arrange to get payment immediately the goods are ready for shipment. With the latter he pays the agreed interest rates on the credit in addition to the commission on factored sales; the latter may range from one to two per cent of the value of the goods, depending upon the volume of turnover which is being factored and the amount of work involved.

A variation of the factoring system is the establishment of finance houses which specialize in the provision of what is called 'non recourse' financing, the aim being to relieve the exporter of the responsibility for the provision of credit. This may take several forms, but broadly the finance house buys the goods and pays cash to the exporter. In some cases the finance house, having bought the goods, then appoints the exporter as the agent for their resale to the overseas buyer; in this way the finance house becomes an undisclosed principal, and its role in the transaction need not be disclosed to the buyer. Any credit risk in the transaction is assumed by the finance house, although the exporter continues to bear full responsibility for any loss due to technical non-performance or dispute over quality.

Charges for this service may vary, but it is somewhat more expensive for the exporter than straightforward financing by overdraft or bill discounting. The reason for this is not only that the finance house has to cover its own administrative costs but also that probably it is dependent upon sources of money which require a higher return than prevailing bank interest rates.

Yet another development has been a growing use in Western Europe of the British confirming house system. Here the foreign buyer places his order with his supplier and asks the confirming house to 'confirm' the transaction. This is done by the confirming house notifying the supplier that it will take delivery of the goods in Britain and pay cash for them. The confirming house then assumes responsibility for delivery of the goods to the buyer and normally allows 90 or 120 days' credit; it charges a commission for its services, plus the current rate of interest for the credit period. The British confirming houses do not limit themselves to confirmation of goods bought in Britain; they are ready also to confirm purchases in the United States, Japan and Western European countries, and this represents an important side of their business.

Some of the finance companies engaged in hire purchase have also entered the export field. Since there are obvious legal disadvantages in a British company making a hire purchase contract with an overseas buyer, groups of companies in the various Western European countries have made co-operative arrangements. Thus if British capital goods were being sold on hire purchase terms to a French buyer, the British finance house might arrange the deal but the actual hiring contract would be between its French associate and the French buyer.

It is possible also to arrange for British capital goods to be leased to a Western European customer. This follows the same lines as a domestic leasing transaction, the customer paying only the rental terms fixed in the contract and the goods remaining the property of the British finance house.

It will be seen that there is a wide range of facilities to meet all types of requirement. The financing services described in this article are provided by reliable organizations, and it is for the exporter to decide which is most suited to his own administrative and financial needs. He has everything to gain from making a careful study of the techniques and how they are provided. In the case of the small exporter, their skilled use can make all the difference in ensuring that exports show a worthwhile profit.

Advertising in France

by Robin Ward, Agence Max Gottschalk.

WITH 9·5 per cent less population than Great Britain and Northern Ireland and something approaching two and a half times more surface area, France presents very different problems to the advertiser.

The most important of these are probably the difference in density of population and the small size of businesses. Just over 40 per cent of the French live in communes of less than 5,000 inhabitants. Of the 2.2 million trading establishments estimated to exist in France, 56 per cent are still one-man or one-family affairs with no employees. Almost exactly half are commercial establishments, and of these 55·9 *per cent have no employees and only* 2·1 *per cent more than ten employees.*

Small businesses – small advertising expenditure

This situation stems largely from France's separateness from the rest of Europe and the world, and isolation as a trading nation almost right up to the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957. The economy has remained divided into small units, and advertising has had no opportunity or incentive to grow. Indeed, it has only just begun to be recognized in France as a basic necessity to volume sales; a spearhead position which America, Britain and other Western European countries have long acknowledged and even encouraged.

The boom is on now, but France still lags far behind her partners and competitors. Gross national expenditure on all forms of advertising increased over 300 per cent in the eight-year period between 1955 and 1962. Despite this increase, however, the gross national expenditure during 1963 is estimated at only £111 million as against an estimated £490 million in Britain.

The meagreness of France's outlay on advertising is even more striking when related to populations. In 1961 (most recent year when some statistics are available) French *per capita* expenditure on advertising of all kinds was less than half of that in Western Germany, roughly one-third of the figure for Britain, Sweden or Switzerland, and only just over one-eighth of the *per capita* expenditure in the United States.

What does the money spent buy?

It is difficult to compare costs between France and Britain as rates tend to be very varied, and in some cases border on fantasy. As a general rule, costs per thousand readers in the press tend to be between 5 per cent and 12 per cent higher than in Britain, but overall costs are lower because of the smaller scope offered by media, particularly the press, and the lack of television.

The breakdown of advertising expenditure between media is estimated as follows:

	Per cent
Press	66
Literature and direct mail	12
Radio	8
Posters and public transport posters	6
Cinema	5
TV, exhibitions, point of sale, etc.	3

This breakdown will vary considerably in 1965 and future years as there will certainly be a decrease in expenditure on outdoor advertising. New legislation at the end of 1964 virtually taxed out of existence free standing poster sites in towns of less than 10,000 inhabitants. Poster advertising along open roads was already practically impossible, and the free standing site more or less attached to very small villages or hamlets had proliferated as a result, and accounted for a large part of poster expenditure. Now only walls can be used, and these sites, too, are menaced with very heavy taxation in the near future.

Cinema advertising should increase now that the audience appears to have stabilized after the decline caused by television from 1957 to 1962. One interesting point about cinema advertising in France is that any single cinema can be used separately, which means that any town, district or region can be used very precisely in a tailor-made local campaign without the restrictions inherent in circuit billing.

France is well covered by cinemas, even down to very small localities. Screen time is sold by the metre projected per week and according to a variable rate based on the size and grade of the cinema.

No national daily press

On a practical level three major differences are apparent between advertising in Britain and France.

Firstly, there is no genuinely national daily press in France. Most of the newspapers claiming a 'national' audience and published in Paris, are, in fact, predominantly Parisian in readership. Circulation figures are small as compared with Britain. Only one daily newspaper tops the million mark, and this is the combined *France Soir/Paris Presse* group which sells 1,079,000 copies every evening, 64 per cent in Paris and the suburbs. The second largest daily, *Le Parisien Libéré*, sells only 733,000 copies per morning, 85 per cent in the Paris region.

Such internationally known dailies as *Le Figaro* and *Le Monde* sell only 393,000 and 189,000 copies respectively. Sixty-four per cent of *Le Figaro's* circulation is Parisian, and over 8 per cent is sold abroad.

One reason for this lack of a national daily press is probably that the Frenchman is just less inclined to read a newspaper than the Englishman. Another is certainly the fact that there is no delivery system for newspapers in France, and anyone wishing to read a paper has to go out and buy it. However, the main cause is most likely the strongly entrenched position of the provincial dailies, many of which have higher circulation figures than the Parisian newspapers.

The biggest provincial daily, *Ouest France*, which is published in Rennes, sells 575,000 copies, covering 14 'Départements' in Normandy and Brittany. The Lyons newspaper *Le Progrès*, sells 462,000 copies per day, *La Voix du Nord* of Lille 365,000 copies, and *Le Dauphine Libéré* of Grenoble 351,000. Altogether, 19 provincial dailies top the 100,000 mark, and ten others sell between 50 and 100,000 copies.

Provincial newspapers all cover closely defined regions with little or no overlapping. In addition they are broken down into 'Départemental' and urban editions which can be used separately by the advertiser so that, as well as their general value, they offer the added advantage of giving precise and immediate yield figures for localized test campaigns which can serve as excellent guides for future national advertising.

In all, general press space is sold by the column millimetre.

The struggling weekly

French weekly newspapers have a very different position from their British counterparts as well. For instance, there is no equivalent in France to the 'quality weekly', which is such an important element in the press scene in Britain. One newspaper-size weekly, *France Dimanche*, sells just over 1,100,000 copies, but it is, in fact, more of a popular illustrated publication than a straightforward newspaper. *Le Journal du Dimanche*, the Sunday weekly belonging to the *France Soir/Paris Presse* group, reaches just over half a million circulation, but it is not directed towards a quality audience.

Until fairly recently that great pre-war French institution *Le journal d'opinion* continued to thrive in a weekly form with such titles as *L'Express* and *France Observateur*, but these have been affected, among other factors, by Algerian independence. Both have now changed their format and layout. *L'Humanité Dimanche* manages to maintain just over 460,000 copies per week, unlike *L'Humanité* proper, which has dropped to below 150,000 copies daily.

Trade press

The general picture for the trade press, on the other hand, is less dissimilar.

At least one specialized periodical exists for almost any trade or industry, and often as many as five or six magazines struggle for the attention of a single specialized audience, each claiming more or less the same readership.

Apart from a very few large journals, audited circulation figures are rarely available for the trade press, so it is important to be well informed on which periodical really is read in a given field before buying space.

Circulation figures are smaller than in Britain, and the quality of layout, make-up and paper is generally inferior with a few notable exceptions.

No commercial television

The second great difference between France and Britain is that France has no national television channel carrying advertising. Whereas just over 17 per cent of advertising expenditure in Britain goes to television, the three 'peripheral' commercial television transmitters which manage to reach viewers in outlying parts of Northern, Eastern and extreme Southern France, account for less than 1 per cent of French expenditure.

The two principal beneficiaries from the lack of a national television medium are the big periodicals (e.g. *Paris Match* with a weekly circulation of one and a quarter million copies, and *Selection du Readers Digest* with just over one million copies a month) and, above all, the three private radio stations. Although these are officially 'peripheral' and have their transmitters in Saarbruck, Luxembourg and Monaco, programmes are produced in Paris and relayed by land-line. The two largest, Europe No. 1 and Radio-Luxembourg, cover almost the whole of France with all-day programmes in French, and are believed to have a higher listening audience than the ORTF (French State radio station). The private radio stations together account for 8 per cent of advertising expenditure.

French is a foreign language

France is a Mediterranean country speaking an almost purely Romance language. The third great difference is, then, a semantic one. Advertising is essentially an Anglo-Saxon development and one of the main causes may well be the extreme flexibility of the English language. French is not flexible in the same way and is certainly not the ideal advertising tongue. With no oral (therefore no italicised) emphasis, no contracted possessive form, no onomatopoeia and almost no alliteration, it is difficult to write copy with the sort of reader-impact which can be obtained in English. Visual impact is hard to achieve, too, because most definite

Transport to France

by A. T. Parker, Thos. Meadows & Co. S.A.

articles which would be dropped in English have to be retained in French and there is no precedent for composite nouns.

It seems unlikely that the language will change very quickly, and certainly not under advertising influence as in Britain, since the French are inclined to look upon their speech as permanently fixed and object strongly to incorrect usage. The recent outcry against 'Franglais', or the penetration of French by English and American words, most of which were used in a different sense in French from the original, bears this out.

For these reasons it is almost impossible to translate a successful advertisement or campaign from English into French, and it is better to re-vamp them from the beginning. This again can be difficult as advertising tends to speak to the consumer in an intimate manner, using terms of reference which he can easily understand and identify. The French have radically different and yet no less intimate terms of reference drawn from their daily lives which are strikingly unlike the daily lives of the British. The list of differences is a long one, and there are surprisingly few similarities.

The future

French advertising is small because circulation figures are small, because there has been no television impetus and because the language does not lend itself to advertising in the same way as English does. This is all true, and yet the main reason remains the small relative size of the individual businesses up to fairly recently. This reason is fast disappearing with the concentration of French industry into larger and more economically viable units, the penetration of the French market by thrusting, go-ahead foreign companies, particularly American, and by the steady application of a Treaty designed to forge Europe into a single community.

Many American, British and other foreign advertising agencies have set up in France over the past few years, either in their own names or by associating with French agencies. Perhaps more will come in the not too distant future. None-the-less, advertising to the French remains principally a French affair, and the French advertising profession seems at present to be lagging behind; to be moving more slowly than the industries it serves. French advertising men are aware of this anomalous position, and a general overhaul of the profession, its institutions and controlling bodies is not far off.

Perhaps the position can best be summed up by quoting Mr. David Ogilvy, who was asked at a recent open discussion with leading advertising men in Paris what he thought was wrong with French advertising. In his answer he cited various points and ended by saying: 'You have no word for advertising. "La Publicité" does not mean advertising, not the way we practise it.'

This is true. The French are looking for a word for advertising, and although they will not be long in finding one, the time they spend in looking could be put to good use by British businesses. With their more pragmatic and down-to-earth approach and their greater experience of a large consumer dimension, they could get off to a head start in the French market.

TRANSPORT is an important factor in the marketing of goods abroad. This article examines the various means of transport which are available for the export of merchandise to France.

AIR – The obvious advantage of speed is usually the first consideration in despatching goods by air, but there is also a saving in packing and insurance costs. Although freight unit rates are higher generally than surface rates, it may cost no more and may even be cheaper to send parcels up to a certain weight, say 100 kgs, by air than by surface route. The reason is that minimum charges are levied on consignments by surface routes which may represent a heavy charge on small shipments. Air companies' tariffs also provide cheaper commodity or weight rates which considerably reduce the unit charge per kilo.

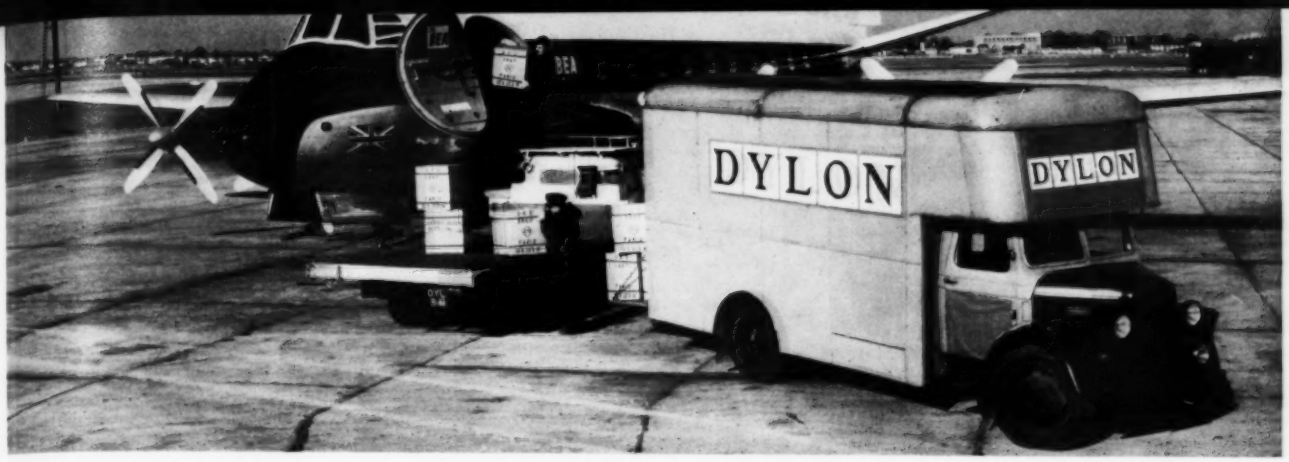
Forwarding agents usually offer first class collection services all over Britain for air despatches to France. Air freight is carried by the principal air lines on their passenger services to Paris, from London, Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow, and large cargo planes fly regularly from London and Manchester. There is also a combined road and air service via channel airports.

SEA – This means rail or road transport to British seaport, if the point of origin is inland thence by sea to either a French port on the coast to the Paris port of Gennevilliers. It must be remembered that though France is a large country it has comparatively few ports, whilst Britain has a large number of ports.

From London port there are cargo services to the Northern French ports, also Paris, Rouen, Nantes, Bordeaux and Marseilles. Less frequent services operate to other ports such as St. Nazaire and La Rochelle. Cargo services to France operate also from Hull, Ipswich, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Leith, Southampton, Bristol, etc. It follows therefore, that while a suitable shipping port in Britain can usually be found not too distant from the factory, care must be taken to ship to the most appropriate point in France in order to avoid long inland transport to the point of destination. The service from London to Paris Gennevilliers is fairly frequent – say an average of one departure per week – while from the other ports sailings are at 10 to 15 day intervals.

RAIL – For goods for which speed is not the vital requirement, through rates exist from most British stations to most French stations, and while this has the undoubted advantage of one unit tariff from station to station, there is also the problem of the long delays encountered by this routing. To the actual running time allowed under international regulations, it is necessary to add the permitted period for the sea crossing which is eight days for GV (Grande vitesse) consignments and 12 days for PV (Petite vitesse) consignments. Moreover, unless there is a customs point available for general clearances at the point of destination, an interruption in the movement takes place at the point of entry into France and further delays are often experienced while the necessary papers for clearance are requested and received.

ROLL ON – ROLL OFF – A new trend in transport to France and one which is developing rapidly is the direct road trailer service from any point in Britain to any point in France. Special licences are required for operating British lorries in France but the trailer service is meeting with increasing success. At the moment it is particularly

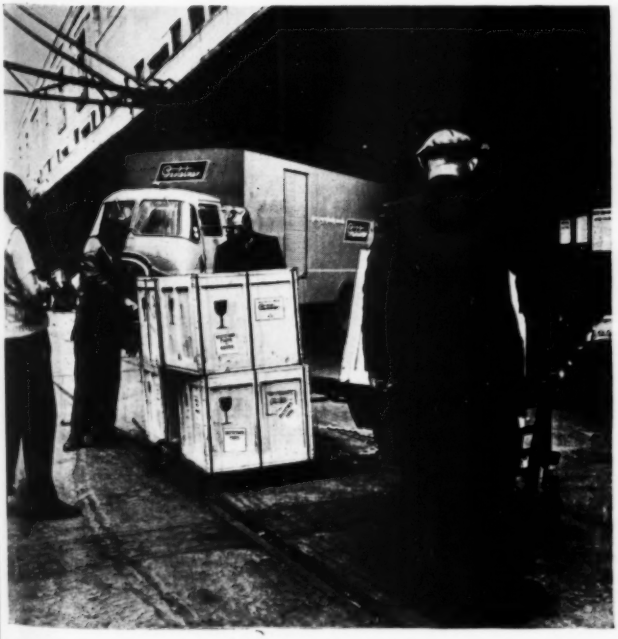


On opposite page: Giant semi-trailers carrying loads of up to 20 tons are using Thoresen Car Ferries Ltd's cross-channel 'roll-through' service on a regular weekly basis.

Above: A BEA Viscount was chartered by Dylon International Ltd., for an urgent consignment to Paris.

Centre: The first commercial helicopter operation to link Paris and London leaving with a Parliamentary delegation, on March 3.

Below: Part of a consignment of Gestetner duplicators for France being loaded at London docks.



developed for the transport of complete trailer loads, say from eight tons upwards. The trailers are hauled by tractors to the British port of shipment, usually Dover, and thence to either Dunkirk or Antwerp, depending on the final destination in France. The trailer is hauled on to the ferry boat for the Channel crossing and at the port of arrival another tractor is coupled to the trailer for the final journey.

The most satisfactory feature of this service is that it provides door to door transport, avoids a great deal of packing and considerably reduces the risk of pilferage. It is unquestionably the best choice of transport for heavy loads such as machinery where extensive and expensive packing would be involved. Customs inspection can take place either at the French point of entry or at one of the road customs houses at the frontier or in the Paris region.

Certain changes in French arrangements for customs inspection are gradually being brought about. The main purpose is to avoid long delays at customs points by developing more inland points of clearance, enabling goods to be cleared through customs either at destination or at the nearest town where a customs office exists for this purpose. The change-over will take a long time but doubtless it will come about with the constant development of the Common Market arrangements.

It is impossible to give firm figures for the cost of transport since so many factors enter into the charge. First the distance from point to point, secondly, the transport rates which vary according to the commodity and the ratio between weight and volume. More expensive transport may be counter-balanced by a saving in packing costs, as in the case of machinery despatched by trailer. All that can be done to illustrate the points raised in this article is to quote one example of a shipment from central London to Paris, as follows:

One case, normal measurement, general merchandise

	100 kgs.	75 kgs.	50 kgs.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
by AIR to PARIS . . .	8 4 0	6 10 0	4 18 0
by SURFACE SEA to PARIS .	4 10 0	4 5 0	4 0 0
by SURFACE RAIL to PARIS	5 5 0	4 11 0	3 12 6

It is therefore vital that a British manufacturer, when studying the possibilities of developing his trade with France, should make a careful assessment of the nature of his shipments, quantity, number of cases, weight and value, and then consult a reliable forwarding agent with branches in France and obtain an estimate of forwarding charges and a recommendation as to the most suitable routing, after taking into account delivery dates and other essential requirements.

French trade Fairs

IN FRANCE, as in Britain, specialized trade fairs and exhibitions tend to be concentrated in the capital city. General fairs include not only the 'Foire de Paris' but also important events in the provinces, at Bordeaux, Lille, Lyons, Marseilles, Metz, Strasbourg and Nice; these are recognized by the French Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs as being of international status. Most of these fairs admit all categories of goods with no specialization. However, that at Nice features tourism extensively, and that at Lyons has in recent years featured a number of specialized salons in association with the main Fair.

Any British manufacturer wishing to widen his existing penetration of the French market would be well advised, in conjunction with his agent, to consider participation in provincial fairs. On the other hand, a manufacturer proposing to exhibit in France for the first time would probably opt for the appropriate specialized fair. The list of fairs given below includes these specialized events as well as the general international events.

Over the past few years, British industry has shown increasing interest in French fairs and the Board of Trade regularly supports British industry at showings in Paris. At first sight it may be surprising to find that the British fashion industry exhibits regularly in Paris; but the growing influence and importance of British fashion is exemplified by the fact that in the last two years groups in the industry have shown in Paris on no less than six occasions. Fashion has also featured in the annual British displays at the Paris Leather Week where the British leather and footwear manufacturers have had successful ventures. British china, pottery and glassware is displayed regularly at the Salon des Arts du Feu, and the British carpet industry has shown in Paris fairs over the past few years. In the last two years, the building materials and horticultural industries have also had successful showings in Paris.

The substantial financial assistance given by the Board of Trade to all these ventures is readily available to other industries both in Paris and in the provinces under the 'joint venture' scheme, particulars of which may be obtained from the Board of Trade, Export Promotion and Fairs Branch, Queen Anne's Mansions, Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W.1.

Title	Frequency and Date		UK Agent or French Organizer
Specialized International Fairs – Paris			
Aeronautical			
International Aeronautical Exhibition	Biennial	June	Union Syndicale des Industries Aéronautiques et Spatiales, 6 rue Galilée, Paris, 16e.
Agriculture, Agricultural Machinery			
International Agricultural Machinery Exhibition (the International Agricultural Show is periodically held with this event)	Annual	March	Salon International de la Machine Agricole, 95 rue St. Lazare, Paris, 9e.
Building, Public Works			
International Building Exhibition (Batimat) held in alternate years with	Biennial	November	Salon International de la Construction, 1 Avenue Niel, Paris, 17e.
International Public Works and Building Exhibition (Expomat)	Biennial	May	
International Mechanical Handling Exhibition / International Hydraulic and Pneumatic Exhibition	Annual	May	Salon de la Manutention, 40 rue du Colisée, Paris, 8e.
Chemicals			
International Chemical Industries Exhibition	Triennial	April/May	Butler's Advertising Service Ltd., Fenwick House, 292 High Holborn, London, W.C.1.
Electrical, Radio, Television, Electronics and Telecommunications			
International Electronic Components Exhibition	Annual	April	Fédération Nationale des Industries Electroniques, 16 rue de Presles, Paris, 15e.
International Festival of Sound	Annual	March	
International Radio and Television Exhibition	Annual (alternate years at Lyons)	September	
Foodstuffs, Hotel and Catering and Food Machinery			
International Confectionery Exhibition (Intersuc)	Annual	September	John Buck (Trade Fair Agencies) Ltd., 47 Brewer Street, London, W.1.
International Hotel and Catering Equipment Exhibition (Equip' Hotel)	Annual	October	Salon Technique International de l'Equipement Hôtelier, 13 rue de Liège, Paris, 9e.
International Packing and Packaging Exhibition	Biennial	November	Salon International de l'Emballage, 20 rue Carpeaux, Puteaux (Seine).
International Food Exhibition	Biennial	November	Salon International de l'Alimentation, 121 Boulevard Haussmann, Paris, 8e.
International Food Industry Equipment Exhibition	Biennial	November	Salon International de l'Equipement des Industries de l'Alimentation, 42 rue du Louvre, Paris, 1er.
Fur			
International Fur Trade Exhibition	Annual	April	Salon International des Industries de la Fourrure, 36 Avenue de l'Opéra, Paris, 1er.
Furniture, Home, Household			
International Furniture Fair held in alternate years with	Biennial	January	Salon International du Meuble, 22 Avenue Franklin-Roosevelt, Paris, 8e.
International Exhibition of Materials and Accessories for Furniture Manufacturers	Biennial	January	
International Domestic Arts Exhibition	Annual	March	Salon International des Arts Ménagers, 15 Avenue de la Division-Leclerc, Puteaux (Seine).
International Pottery and Glassware Exhibition	Annual	June	Salon International des Arts du Feu, 32 rue de Paradis, Paris 10e.

Title	Frequency and Date		UK Agent or French Organizer
Specialized International Fairs – Paris cont.			
Laundry International Laundry Equipment Exhibition	Biennial	November	Salon International de l'Equipement de la Blanchisserie, 80 Boulevard Malesherbes, Paris, 8e.
Leather, Footwear International Leather Week	Annual	September	Conseil National du Cuir, 2 rue Edouard VII, Paris, 9e.
Motor Cars, Motor Cycles, Cycles International Motor Car, Cycle and Motor Cycle Exhibition	Annual	October	R. C. Liebman, 178 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.
Nautical International Nautical Exhibition International Pleasure Craft Exhibition	Annual	January	Robert Brandon Partners Ltd., 10 Clifford Street, London, W.1.
Office Equipment, Printing International Office Equipment Exhibition (Sicob)	Annual	October	Salon de l'Equipement de Bureau, 6 Place Valois, Paris, 1er.
International Paper, Printing and Allied Trades Equipment Exhibition	Variable	June	Salon des Techniques Papetières et Graphiques, 40 rue du Colisée, Paris, 8e.
Shop Equipment International Shop Equipment Exhibition	Annual	October	Salon de l'Equipement des Commerces, 42 rue du Louvre, Paris, 1er.
Sports International Nature Exhibition (Hunting and Fishing)	Biennial	May	Salon International de la Nature, 23 rue Notre-Dame des Victoires, Paris, 2e.
International Professional Open Air Equipment and Fishing Exhibition	Annual	October	Spodex, 149 rue St. Honoré, Paris, 1er.
Textiles, Clothing and Machinery European Show for Men's Clothing	Annual	February	Salon International de l'Habillement Masculin, 8 rue Richelieu, Paris, 1er.
International Exhibition of Women's Ready-to-Wear Clothing	Bi-annual	April/May October/ November	Salon International du Prêt-à-Porter Féminin, 23 rue Notre-Dame des Victoires, Paris, 2e.
International Textile Trade Fair	Biennial	May	Marché Textile International, 10 rue d'Anjou, Paris, 8e.
International Clothing Trade and Knitwear Industries Equipment Exhibition	Variable		Salon International de l'Equipement des Industries de l'Habillement et de la Bonneterie, 40 rue du Colisée, Paris, 8e.
Toys International Toy Fair	Annual	February	Exhibitions & Trade Fairs Ltd., 10 Clifford Street, London, W.1.
Specialized International Fairs – Outside Paris			
Food Dijon: Gastronomic Fair	Annual	October/ November	Administration de la Foire Gastronomique, Palais des Expositions, Boulevard de Champagne, Dijon.
Hardware, Ironmongery Lyons: International Hardware, Hand Tool and Domestic Heating Exhibition (in conjunction with International Trade Fair)	Annual	March	Exhibitions & Trade Fairs Ltd., 10 Clifford Street, London, W.1.
Plastics Oyonnax: International Plastics Exhibition	Annual	May	Salon International des Plastiques, Hôtel-de-Ville, Oyonnax.
Watches Besançon: International Horological Exhibition	Annual	September	Salon International de l'Horlogerie, 54 Grande-Rue, Besançon (Doubs).
Winter Sports Grenoble: International Winter Sports Exhibition	Annual	March	Salon International des Sports d'Hiver, 1 Place Jacqueline-Marval, Grenoble (Isère).
Woodworking Machinery Lyons: International Woodworking Machinery Exhibition (in conjunction with International Trade Fair)	Annual	March	Exhibitions & Trade Fairs Ltd., 10 Clifford Street, London, W.1.
General International Fairs – France			
Bordeaux: International Trade Fair	Annual	June	Foire Internationale de Bordeaux, 12 Place de la Bourse, Bordeaux.
Lille: International Trade Fair	Annual	April/May	Weigel Leygonie & Co. Ltd., 31-32 King Street, London, W.C.2.
Lyons: International Trade Fair	Annual	March	Exhibitions & Trade Fairs Ltd., 10 Clifford Street, London, W.1.
Marseilles: International Trade Fair	Annual	September/ October	Foire Internationale de Marseille, Parc Chanot, Marseille.
Metz: International Trade Fair	Annual	September/ October	Mrs. Muriel C. Black, 47 Nottingham Place, London, W.1.

Title	Frequency and Date		UK Agent or French Organizer
Paris: International Trade Fair (Foire de Paris) . . .	Annual	May	French Chamber of Commerce, Park House, 24 Rutland Gate, London, S.W.7.
Strasbourg: International Trade Fair	Annual	September	Foire Internationale de Strasbourg, 9 rue Brûlée, Strasbourg.
Nice: International Trade Fair (Tourism)	Annual	March	Foire Internationale de Nice, 8 Place Massena, Nice.

Government and non-government export services

(Fuller details of most of these services may be found in the Supplements for the Benelux countries and Italy, published in the *Board of Trade Journal* of December 6, 1963, and July 3, 1964, respectively.)

Tariffs, Market Information, Agents

Board of Trade:
Export Services Branch and Export Information Centre,
Hillgate House, 35 Old Bailey, London, E.C.4. Tel. City 5757.

Regional offices
(see list on page 17).

British Embassy (Commercial Department),
35 rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, Paris 8.
Tel. Anjou 2710-2714; 0620-0624.

British Consulates-General at Lyons, Marseilles, Strasbourg
(for addresses see page 17).

British Consulates at Bordeaux and Lille
(for addresses see page 17).

British Chamber of Commerce,
6 rue Halévy, Place de l'Opéra, Paris 9.

Exhibitions and Fairs

Export Promotion and Fairs Branch,
Queen Anne's Mansions, Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W.1.
Tel. Abbey 7877.

Export Credit Insurance

Export Credits Guarantee Department,
Head Office: 59-67 Gresham Street, London, E.C.2.
Tel. Monarch 6699.

Trade Missions, Promotional Activities

Export Council for Europe,
21 Tothill Street, London, S.W.1. Tel. Whitehall 2256.

Commercial Information

Association of British Chambers of Commerce,
68 Queen Street, London, E.C.4. Tel. City 7211.
(Day-to-day export problems are dealt with by the various affiliated Chambers of Commerce.)

Federation of British Industries,
21 Tothill Street, London, S.W.1. Tel. Whitehall 6711.

National Association of British Manufacturers,
6 Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C.1. Tel. City 6031, 3474.
(The Association also has several Regional Offices.)

French Chamber of Commerce,
Park House, Rutland Gate, London, S.W.7.
Tel. Knightsbridge 9628.

Investment in France

Board of Trade (CRE Department),
Victoria Street, London, S.W.1. Tel. Abbey 7877

London Branches of French Banks:

Société Générale,
105-108 Old Broad Street, London, E.C.2. Tel. London Wall 5212.

British and French Bank Ltd.,
Imrie House, King William Street, London, E.C.4.
Tel. Mansion House 5678.

Comptoir National d'Escompte de Paris,
8-13 King William Street, London, E.C.4.
Tel. Mansion House 5231.

British Banks:

Barclays Bank Ltd.,
Head Office: 54 Lombard Street, London, E.C.3.
Tel. Mansion House 0505.

Lloyds Bank Europe Ltd.,
100 Pall Mall, London, S.W.1. Tel. Whitehall 0831.

Travel Information

French Railways,
179 Piccadilly, London, W.1. Tel. Hyde Park 1621.

Air-France and Air Inter,
158 New Bond Street, London, W.1. Tel. Grosvenor 9030.

French Government Tourist Office,
Official Information Centre, 178 Piccadilly, London, W.1.
Tel. Hyde Park 3171.

British Rail (Continental Inquiries),
Victoria, London, S.W.1.
Tel. Victoria 2345 (Passenger Services and Fares),
Sloane 3440 (Car Ferry Inquiries).

British European Airways,
London Sales Office: Dorland House, Lower Regent Street, London, S.W.1.
Tel. Gerrard 9833 (Passenger Bookings, International Flights).
Other telephone numbers: Skyport 3131 (Flight Inquiries).
Skyport 3242 (Export Cargo), Frobisher 4255 (Import Cargo).

West London Air Terminal,
Cromwell Road, London, S.W.7. Tel. Frobisher 4224.

Skyways Ltd.,
7 Berkeley Street, London, W.1.
Tel. Grosvenor 7721, 2765.
Coach Air Terminal, 29 Elizabeth Street, London, S.W.1.
Tel. Sloane 0647.
Reservations, Victoria Coach Station, London, S.W.1.
Tel. Sloane 7800.

British Travel Association, 64, St. James's Street, London, S.W.1.
Tel.: Mayfair 9191.

Success stories

Dowty Group companies export to France hydraulic and electro-hydraulic equipment for the aviation and automotive industries. The Dassault Balzac and Mirage 3V VTOL aircraft, the Breguet Atlantic maritime reconnaissance aircraft, Alize naval aircraft and the Sud Caravelle jet airliner all use equipment made by Dowty Rotol Ltd. In addition, this company is a large supplier of spares to Air France for their Caravelle and Viscount airliners.

Several French companies build under licence Dowty Rotol propellers and accessory gear boxes, and the Dowty Vapour Core Pump.

Three years ago **K Shoes,** of Kendal, sold only a small quantity of men's shoes to France because retailers were put off by various difficulties and delays in importing. The Kendal firm analyzed these difficulties carefully and devised a new approach. This included production of a new range of shoe from specially designed lasts, building up replacement stocks, quoting store-delivered prices, revised transport arrangements including use of air freight, regular advertising, regular visiting at director level, and annual exhibition at the Leather Week in Paris. As a result K shoes are now selling in 40 of the leading shoe shops in France and business is growing each year.

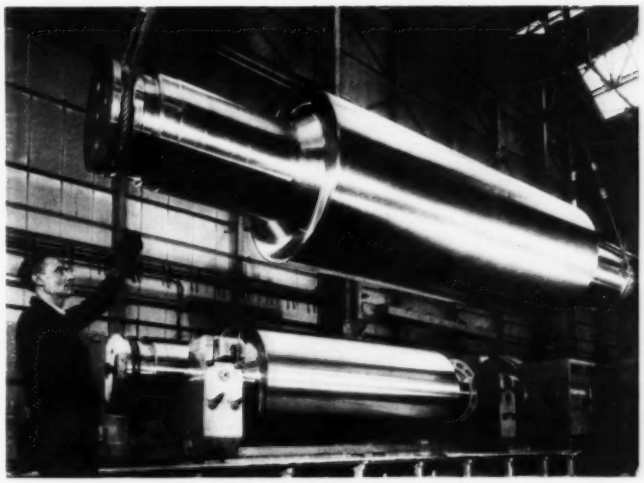
In 1963, **A. Sanderson & Co. Ltd.,** Hull, launched in France their Helmsman range of one-can polyurethane yacht finishes including enamel, varnish, non-slip deck paint, fibres and stoppers. Through a French advertising agent the products were advertised in French yachting magazines. Difficulties encountered in adapting the products to French conditions and painting practices were overcome as they arose. Sales are made through a stock holding distributor with agents in main yachting centres. Literature, packaging and instructions in French, frequent visits to France by a director able to converse in French, and the provision of ample credit facilities have also helped in the success of the venture. The products became well established in 1963 and in 1964 sales increased appreciably.

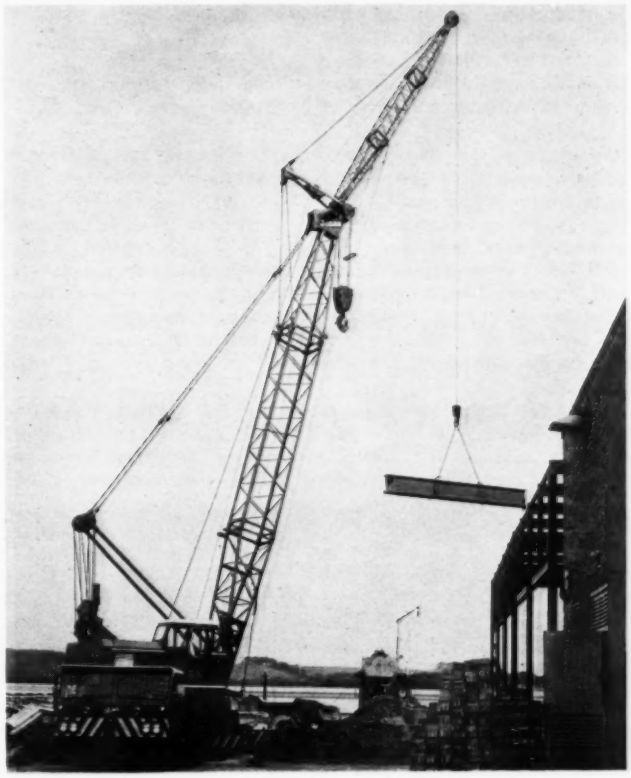
Delapena and Son Ltd., of Cheltenham, have supplied the French engineering industries with honing and induction heating equipment for many years. Speed and precision characterize the horizontal hand honing machines which are popular for both production line use and tool room work. Honing accessories are supplied for garage and automobile reconditioning work. Delapena induction heaters are used for practically all heat treatment processes in the automobile and machine tool industry. Delapena are among the foremost British suppliers of these types of equipment to French industry, which takes 20 per cent of Delapena exports.

In December 1964, a huge Jones British mobile crane made by **K. and L. Steelfounders and Engineers Ltd.,** mounted on a British chassis and sold to a French firm of transport and lifting contractors, was presented to a gathering of French and British officials and of others interested in this remarkable tool, at the Vieux-Fumé depot of Major J. R. Crampton.

Major Crampton, who has the advantage of being bilingual, began to establish his agency business on the outskirts of Paris soon after the end of the war. Bit by bit he built up an excellent connection, using local agents throughout the country to spread his clients' goods over the whole of Metropolitan France.

Major Crampton admits that the last 16 years have been a long hard slog, but he can be proud of his success in creating a business which now represents a number of British firms, Evered and Co. Ltd. and Warsop Power Tools Ltd., being amongst the principal ones.





Above:
Ruston-Bucyrus crawler-mounted electric shovel operating at Mines de Redange Dilling, Longwy, Northern France.

Centre:
The longest pair of composite back-up rolls for use in the rolling of aluminium and its alloys yet produced at the Atlas Works of Firth Brown, Ltd. They are for the Cegedur rolling mills at Issoire, in Central France.

Below:
Jones KL 15-30 lorry-mounted crane destined for Pinson et Viltatte of La Corneure.

In three years France has become the best export market for men's high quality outerwear made by **Atkinson Rhodes & Co. (1958) Ltd.**, of Leeds. The first two years were spent in visiting Paris to study styles, designs, fittings and cloth preferences, prior to the making and remaking of trial garments. Then came the need to convince discerning French customers that normal production would match samples and be delivered on time. This done, sales in the Paris area grew until the number of accounts there exceeded those in London. With the assistance of the Board of Trade and British Embassy in Paris an agent was appointed and Atkinson Rhodes clothing is now selling in most of the major towns of France. Over 50 per cent of sales are to overseas markets, and one half of these are to France.

Melting furnaces manufactured by **Sklenar Furnaces Ltd.**, of Cardiff, are being installed in increasing quantities in French non-ferrous foundries. The French motor car industry extensively uses Sklenar furnaces for their production of high grade aluminium castings; 15 installations have been sold to two leading manufacturers since 1961. The new oil fired FeMelt furnace recently introduced by Sklenar Furnaces Ltd. is also proving of great interest to French iron founders.

Before each furnace is installed in France technical staff from Britain ensure that it is operating correctly and is fully understood by the buyer. This after-sales service undoubtedly attributes to the continued success of the increasing sales being achieved in France.

Because **John Crossley & Sons Ltd.**, of Halifax, are conscious of the necessity to meet the individual requirements of markets abroad they produce, in co-operation with their French agent, carpets to the designs, colours and sizes required by their customers. Some of these designs are already popular with the well known carpet stores in Paris and throughout France.

A marked improvement in their exports to France is the result of this progressive policy.

Crossleys are regular exhibitors at the Salon du Meuble, Paris.

In 1965, **Fropax Eskimo Frood Ltd.** will export to France seventy-five times as much frozen food as they did in 1960. Now the value of the Company's exports to France is well into six figures sterling.

Fropax Eskimo Frood attribute most of their success in this field to two major factors – intensive investigation at first hand of the French market, and the co-operation and skill of the distributor appointed to handle the company's products.

All products exported to France are packed in cartons printed in French, and special lines have been developed as a result of research into the particular requirements of the French market.

Working in close co-operation with their French agents, **Shaw of London (Furniture) Ltd.**, of Hainault, Essex, have quickly built up a reputation for a high standard of English reproduction furniture in France, where customers are extremely particular about the style and finish of imported furniture.

Offering a very wide range of dining room and occasional furniture, Shaw of London have found that French buyers are most interested in stylish and elegant pieces which will complement their clients' existing furniture. For this reason the current French preferences for surfaces and colours must always be adhered to.

Coincident with the opening of the French Public Works Exhibition 'Expomat' in February, 1964 in Paris, the formation of a new subsidiary marketing company in France was announced by **British Crane and Excavator Corporation,** of Sunderland. The new company, Coles-France, which exhibited four cranes and an excavator at the Exhibition, has established premises at Argenteuil, near Paris, which include workshops, spare parts and service facilities, crane storage and office accommodation. It can offer all three main methods of power transmission; diesel-electric, diesel-mechanical and diesel-hydraulic, and lifting capacities from 1,000 kgs. to 100,000 kgs. In the short time since it has been established the company reports a steady flow of orders and wide-spread interest in its products throughout all sections of French industry.

On all but the steepest and most rugged sites where gradients exceed 1 in 6, the articulated dumptruck can be used. Designed specifically as a low-cost dumper, the articulated dumptruck combines the rugged construction of heavy dumpers with the running economy of tippers.

One such dumptruck, a Camill 4/10 Dumper, sold two years ago by **E. Boydell & Company Ltd.**, Gloucester, to the Société d'exploitations des carrières de St. Cézaire for use in a sand and limestone quarry, still uses the original tyres. The machine works alongside a Poclain TC.45 Excavator, which loads it. The Camill then carries the rock to the primary crusher.

A Camill 4/10 dumper was also recently sold to the Ecole d'Apprentissage de Travaux Publics at Egletons, and will be used for practical training in dumper operations.

The first installation of **Brecknell, Dolman and Rogers Ltd.**'s egg grading machines was completed in 1960. In France, about that time, certain leading members of co-operative farmers groups, were planning organized marketing of fresh eggs and came to England to see their Auto Packers in operation. As a result, seven machines were installed in 1961 . . . five of them in the largest packing station in France at Villars-les-Dombes, Lyons.

Eight packing stations are now using similar machines, and the Bristol company have in hand several further machines for delivery to France by the spring of 1965.

Following success in the manufacture of components for the electronics industry in the United Kingdom, **Floform Parts Ltd.**, of Newtown, Montgomeryshire, looked to the Continent for customers. An agent was established in Paris and as a result of repeated visits to French electronics factories, firm orders were placed with the company. Floform's ability to carry out design modifications according to the customers' requirements have enabled them to secure contracts against fierce American competition.

In 1962, Mr. Bernat Klein, managing director of **Bernat Klein, Ltd.**, Galashiels, took his collection of fashion fabrics to Paris for the first time. In 1964 fourteen Paris couturiers were using Bernat Klein fabrics.

Until two years ago production was concentrated on scarves and stoles, but the scope has been widened to include high-quality women's fashion fabrics, men's suitings, knitting yarns and knitwear. The firm is justly proud of the success of the fabrics, mainly designed by Mr. Klein himself, with the discerning French couturiers. Present indications are that in 1965, Paris Couture will be showing far more Klein fabrics, and the European market will expand considerably.

Whisky-à-gogo

How delightful to sit on the terrace of a cafe in France and sip an aperitif! That is the tourist's idea of the French way of life. But, like so many other features of life in France, this one has changed. In reality the French have gone over in a big way to drinking whisky, which comes a trifle less expensive than in Britain.

At diplomatic cocktail parties whisky rivals champagne; at those bars where businessmen foregather before their expense account lunches, whisky has the edge, while among the young it is whisky all the way.

It could always be bought at the higher class grocers' shops which sell the best wine; now whisky is found in the small shops and the supermarkets.

Although the advertising of whisky is forbidden, France is Scotland's second-best customer for whisky.

British Exports of Whisky to France

1960	1961	1962	1963
£1,333,000	£1,952,000	£2,881,000	£3,623,000

But Britain spends three or four times as much on French wines (without counting brandy and other drinks) so we may hope that whisky has an even more golden future.

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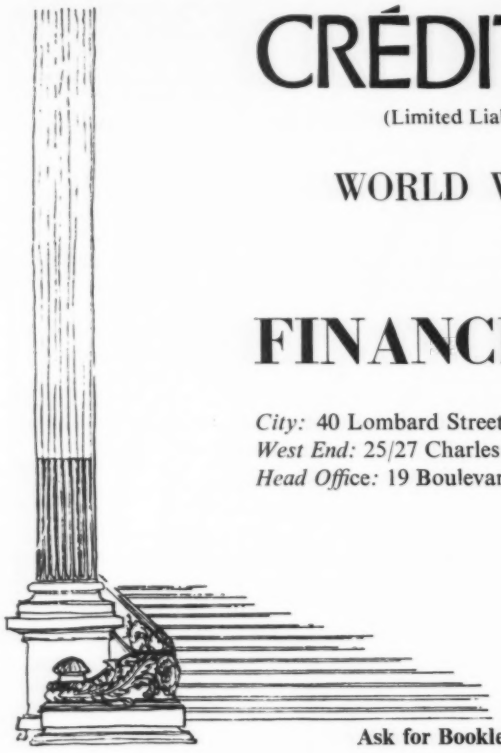

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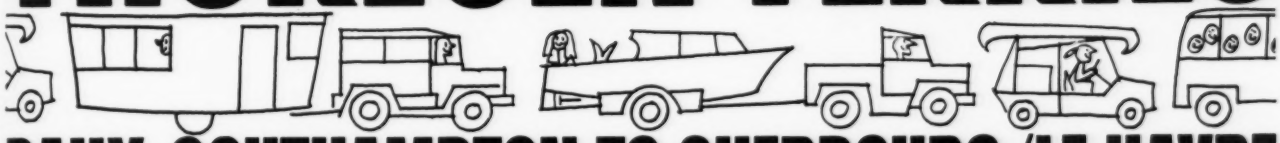

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